

# China

T O U R I S M

WUMENG MOUNTAINS



111





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# EDITORIAL

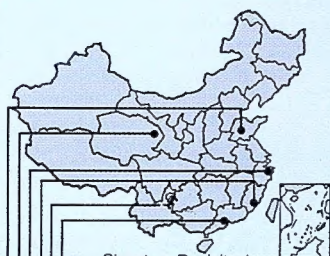
## Multiple Traditions Preserved

Just over six months ago, in CHINA TOURISM no. 104, we focused on an area of Guizhou southeast of the provincial capital, Guiyang, famous for its concentration of minority peoples.

This month we turn our attention to the opposite end of this still relatively rarely visited province, to the region traversed by the Wumeng Mountains in the far northwest close to Yunnan and Sichuan. Here, among rolling uplands which evoke a very different atmosphere from the eroded, dramatic karst landscapes more commonly associated with Guizhou, lives a galaxy of minority nationalities — Yi, Hui, Miao and Bouyei. Each of these retains its own colourful traditions and cultural background, but there are also considerable variations within each nationality; for example, between the Dahua, Xiaohua, Pantou and Niujiao Miao, to name just a few of the Miao branches our reporters encountered. So strong are these minority traditions that Weining even has a community of Han Chinese (whose womenfolk until recently practised foot-binding) clothing whose has taken on certain characteristics of their non-Han neighbours.

In many respects, this part of the country seems very remote. Yet, as we point out in Travel Notes, although time-consuming, it is not difficult to combine a visit to Weining with a trip to Anshun, the base for Guizhou's most famous sight, the Huangguoshu Falls. Once past Shuicheng (Lupanshui), which is as far as one can go by train, however, the traveller has to depend on the long-distance buses which connect the major towns. Walking is obligatory in much of the region!

The unspoilt, secluded nature of the area is probably also part of the reason why birds are attracted in such numbers to the vast, shallow expanse of Lake Caohai, which lies close to Weining at 2,170 metres above sea-level. The most famous — and certainly the rarest — of the migratory birds to be seen in season is the black-necked crane, which nests on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau but winters right here in northwestern Guizhou.



Shantou Revisited

**Wumeng Mountains**

Island of Music

Masterpieces of Ningbo Wood-Carving

Religious Art of Ta'er Lamasery

A Grand Ceremony Re-enacted





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**Front cover:** A Xiaohua Miao girl from the Wumeng Mountains in festive dress (by Zeng Xianyang)

**China**

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WUMENG MOUNTAINS

# Rolling Uplands of Northwestern Guizhou

TEXT BY JUN FENG



Photo by Wang Miao



Photo by Wang Miao

**T**he whole of Guizhou Province could be said to be one vast plateau which slants downwards from west to east at an average height of one thousand metres above sea-level. Guizhou is generally noted for its heavily eroded landscape, the result of the limestone and karst formations which cover some eighty percent of its 170,000 square kilometres and bring with them a varied scenery of green basins between jagged mountains, with underground rivers and some extensive cave systems.

In the northwest of the province, however, the picture is rather different. Here the Wumeng Mountains lie on a northeast-southwest axis astraddle the border between Guizhou and Yunnan. The range reaches an average of 2,500 metres above sea-level, with its major peak, Xiliang, at 2,800 metres. The highest point in Guizhou Province, Jiucaiping, sits a little to the east of the main range at the triangular juncture between the territories of the counties of Hezhang and Weining and the city of Lupanshui.

Most of the area of the Wumeng Mountains within Guizhou falls inside the Weining Yi, Hui and Miao Autonomous County and Hezhang County. Since the altitude of these counties, ranging between 1,500 and 2,400 metres, is already high, the 'mountains' look more like rolling uplands. Further south, in the vicinity of the River Beipan, there are deep valleys formed by the scarps marking the limit of the plateau.

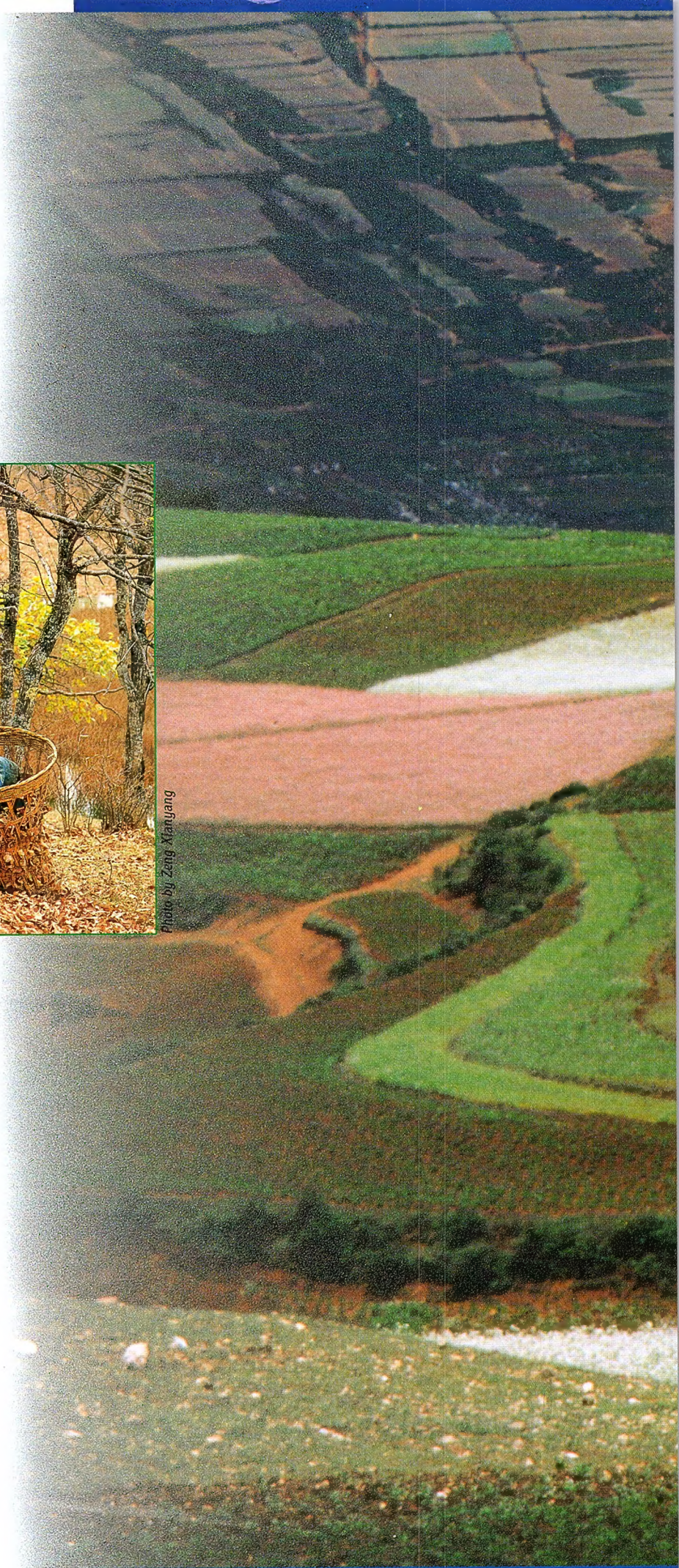
Weining County is also the source of Guizhou's largest river, the Wujiang, at this infant stage known as the Sancha. It is renamed the Yachi further downstream before, swollen by many tributaries, it becomes the



Photo by Wang Miao



Photo by Zeng Xiangyang









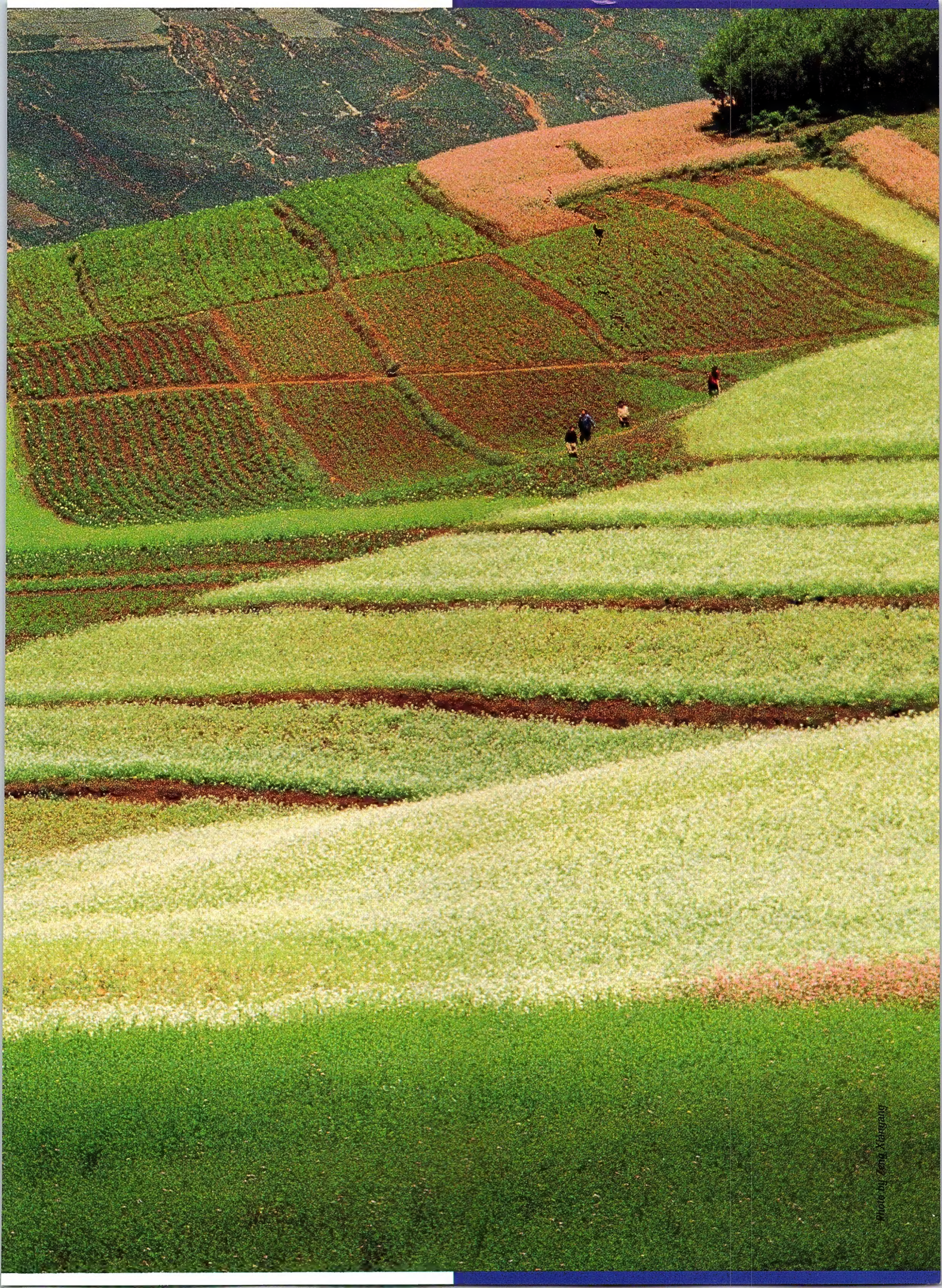






Photo by Zeng Xianyang

Photo by Wang Miao



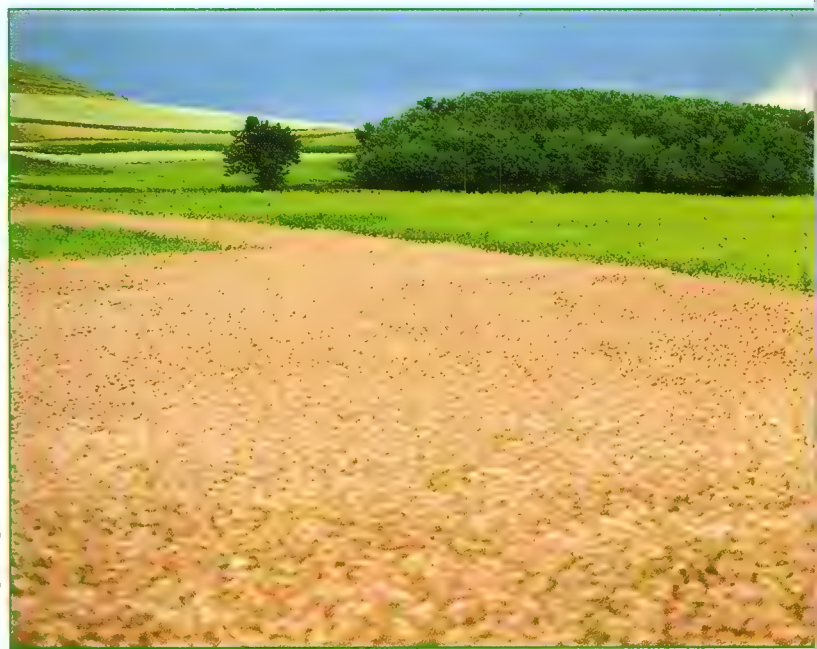
Wujiang for its final course to join the Yangtse at Fuling to the east of the Sichuan Basin.

Yi, Hui, Miao and Bouyei peoples, as well as Han Chinese, call Weining home. According to the 1982 census, the autonomous county, which was established in November 1954, had a total population of over 760,000, about 190,000 or 24.8 percent of which were members of minority groups. This figure included over 73,000 Yi, 57,000 Hui and 49,000 Miao.

Just as the old saying to the effect that Guizhou is a 'land without three feet of flat ground' is not strictly true of the Weining area, the same goes for the second part of that saying: this is certainly no 'land without three sunny days in a row'! Whereas Guizhou in general bears the unenviable reputation of being cloudy and drizzly year-round, Weining is spared this. In fact, it notches up many more sunny days than the provincial capital, Guiyang, and enjoys a climate more like that of Kunming, capital of neighbouring Yunnan. The average annual temperature in Weining is 10 to 12°C.



Photo by Wang Miao



Although communications have improved in recent years, the railway stops short of the county town of Weining, and buses provide the main transport between the larger settlements in the area. But many villages and hamlets are still inaccessible by road, and pack-horses and human brawn remain the only means of transporting goods along the paths which traverse the plateau and scale the hills.

Whatever their ethnic origin, the people here live close to nature. They are mainly farmers, with mixed animal husbandry the rule. There are fruit orchards too, and many of the people living in the immediate vicinity of the county town of Weining also harvest fish from Lake Caohai.

Since the slopes are gentle, strip cultivation rather than terracing is the norm, although the strips too tend to follow the natural contours of the land. In season, the ripening crops produce surprisingly vivid slashes of colour, the predominant green tinged with contrasting highlights depending on the crop — pink and red for sweet buckwheat, white for bitter buckwheat, for example. The potato plant is visible everywhere, potatoes forming a dietary staple for the peoples of the Wumeng Mountains. Maize is also grown, but the climate and altitude are unfavourable for rice.

During the spring and through into the summer, the wide plateau landscape is aglow with wild azaleas in flower. The slopes are generally fairly bare of trees but, when autumn comes round, there are enough woods tucked away in sheltered clefts to provide the people with leaves as fuel for their fires and fodder for their livestock.



Photo by Zeng Xianyang





WUMENG MOUNTAINS

# Haunt of Cranes: Lake Caohai

PHOTOS BY WANG MIAO    TEXT BY TIAN HUO



Photo by Zeng Xianyang







**L**ake Caohai, one of the largest freshwater lakes on the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, lies at 2,170 metres above sea-level just southwest of the county town of the Weining Yi, Hui and Miao Autonomous County in Guizhou Province.

The lake covers an area of forty-five square kilometres, although it has shrunk from its former size, and it is one of the few lakes in Guizhou. In spring and summer, it boasts no less than thirty-seven species of higher aquatic plants such as *Scirpus tabernaemontani* and *Scirpus triqueter*, while the yellow flowers of *Nymphoides peltatum* bloom on the surface in the shallows alongside the humble duckweed. The lake certainly provides a rich living environ-

ment for plants, which is probably how it gets its name, Caohai literally meaning 'Grass Sea'.

On the shore, most days, you can see fishermen preparing to set out for a day's fishing in their flat-bottomed punts. Neat rows of staked nets stretch out to the horizon. The fishermen lay down barrel-like bamboo pots specially made for the purpose and draw the nets tight around them; the schools of fish are inevitably forced into the pots and cannot escape.

There is said to be a total of nine kinds of fish in the lake, but even the local people cannot distinguish the *Ctenogobius giurinus* from the Yunnan loach, the *Oryzias latipes* from

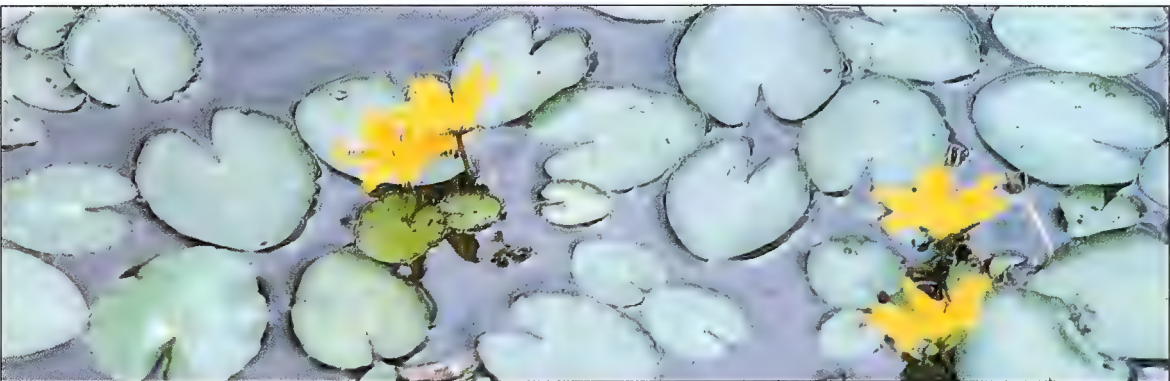


Photo by Zeng Xianyang



the *Hemiculter leuciscus*. Instead, they refer to all these fish by the lump designation of *xi* (small fish); steamed fresh or dried in the sun, these are considered one of Guizhou's specialties. Often, when cleaned, the fish are found to contain shrimps in their gut.

During the Paleolithic era, one hundred and fifty thousand years ago, the southwestern bank of the lake was settled by humans who lived by fishing, hunting and gathering berries and roots.

Now most of the people living around the lake are members of the Hui minority. Besides fishing, they engage in animal husbandry and agriculture, growing potatoes, maize and buck-

wheat. The best farmland is in the marshy lower-lying areas which once formed part of the lake bed. Thanks to the deposits left by the receding waters and constant tilling and tending of the rich peaty soil by generations of farmers, it is highly fertile.

But life in the Weining area used to be hard indeed. A popular saying expresses it like this:

*Potatoes and buckwheat  
Are what you live on at Shaopu's  
Goujiezi.*

*If you'd like to eat maize,  
You'll have to wait until your wife gives  
birth.*

*If you'd like to eat rice,*

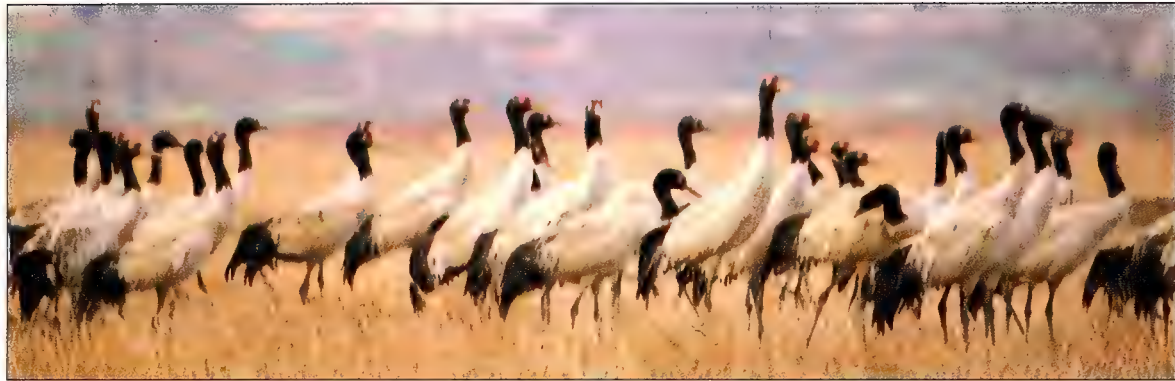


Photo by Zeng Xianyang





*You'll have to wait until your next reincarnation.*

Lake Caohai lies among the green Wumeng Mountains which shelter it from the harshest of the westerlies, year in, year out. In autumn the wind carries with it the bugling cries of black-necked cranes. For thousands of years these migratory birds — now rare and facing extinction — have loved this mild region at the southern end of their flight paths from the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and Siberia. They fly in V-shaped formations; the Chinese see in this the character 人 which means 'man'. White-crowned cranes, white storks and many ducks, geese and other wildfowl also congregate here.

The area remains relatively warm and dry even in deepest winter. Not only the lake's plant life but also the farmlands around provide excellent feeding for the birds. White-crowned cranes, for example, eat a variety of fish, crustaceans, insects and water plants — as well as grain, which may be less to the farmers' liking. However, the Moslem Hui do not kill living beings unless absolutely necessary; doubtless another reason for the large numbers of birds which pass the winter here. From around October onwards they enjoy a respite from the cold of their usual territories until, in March or April, it is time for them to return north.

Translated by Gu Weizhou







# The Colourful Peoples



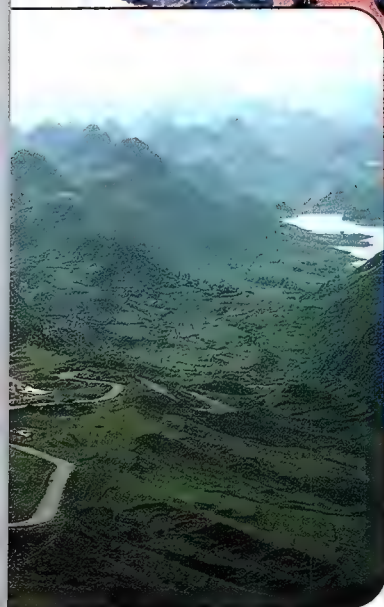
The older generation of Bouyei women in Shushe and surrounding areas like to dress in black and white (1) while, in Yangjiezi, some Miao men still preserve their traditional hairstyle (5). The road from Shuicheng coils its way over Mount Meihua (3); every Red Yi household in Majie has a potato store nearby (4). The Hui baby on its father's back is protected by a cloth typically embroidered with cross-stitch (2) (2 and 3 by Wang Miao).





# of the Wumeng Mountains

PHOTOS BY ZENG XIANYANG • ARTICLE BY TIAN HUO







1

*Set beside Lake Caohai, the town of Weining enjoys a mild, dry climate (1), but Mount Meihua is frequently shrouded in thick fog (3, by Dai Xiaozhong). Bouyei girls of Shushe with their age-betraying headgear (2).*





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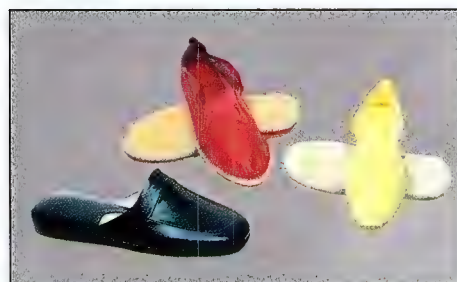




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### SCOPE OF BUSINESS

#### 1. FOREST PRODUCTS:

Candles, X'mas gifts, plush toys, sesame oil, fireworks and fire-crackers, hardware, flowers, birds, fish, bamboo leaves, etc.

#### 2. JUTE AND PLASTIC PRODUCTS:

Jute bags, jute cloth, jute yarn, degummed ramie, ramie top, pp/jute mixed bags, pp woven bags, woven polymesh bags; coated pp woven cloth, paper mulberry bark, plastic products, etc.

#### 3. DRIED FRUITS & VEGETABLES:

Dehydrated vegetables, dried chillies, honey, feedstuffs, dried mushrooms, dried black fungus, dried day lilies and other edible fungus, dried dates, ginkgo nuts pickled mustard tuber, salted cucumber, etc.

#### 4. BAMBOO & WOODEN PRODUCTS:

Logs, timber, fibreboard, wooden chopsticks and various wooden products and furniture, woven bamboo products such as curtains, birdcages, brooms, etc.

#### 5. CARPETS & RUGS:

"Peony & Phoenix" brand silk carpets, woollen carpets, hooked rugs, full cut rugs with latex back, cotton waste rugs and "Swan" brand velvet rugs.

#### 6. ANIMAL BY-PRODUCTS:

Leather and fur garments, leather slippers, leather espadrilles, bristle brushes, bristles, down garments, down quilts, down and feather products, casings and other animal by-products.





# The Religious Art of Ta'er Lamasery

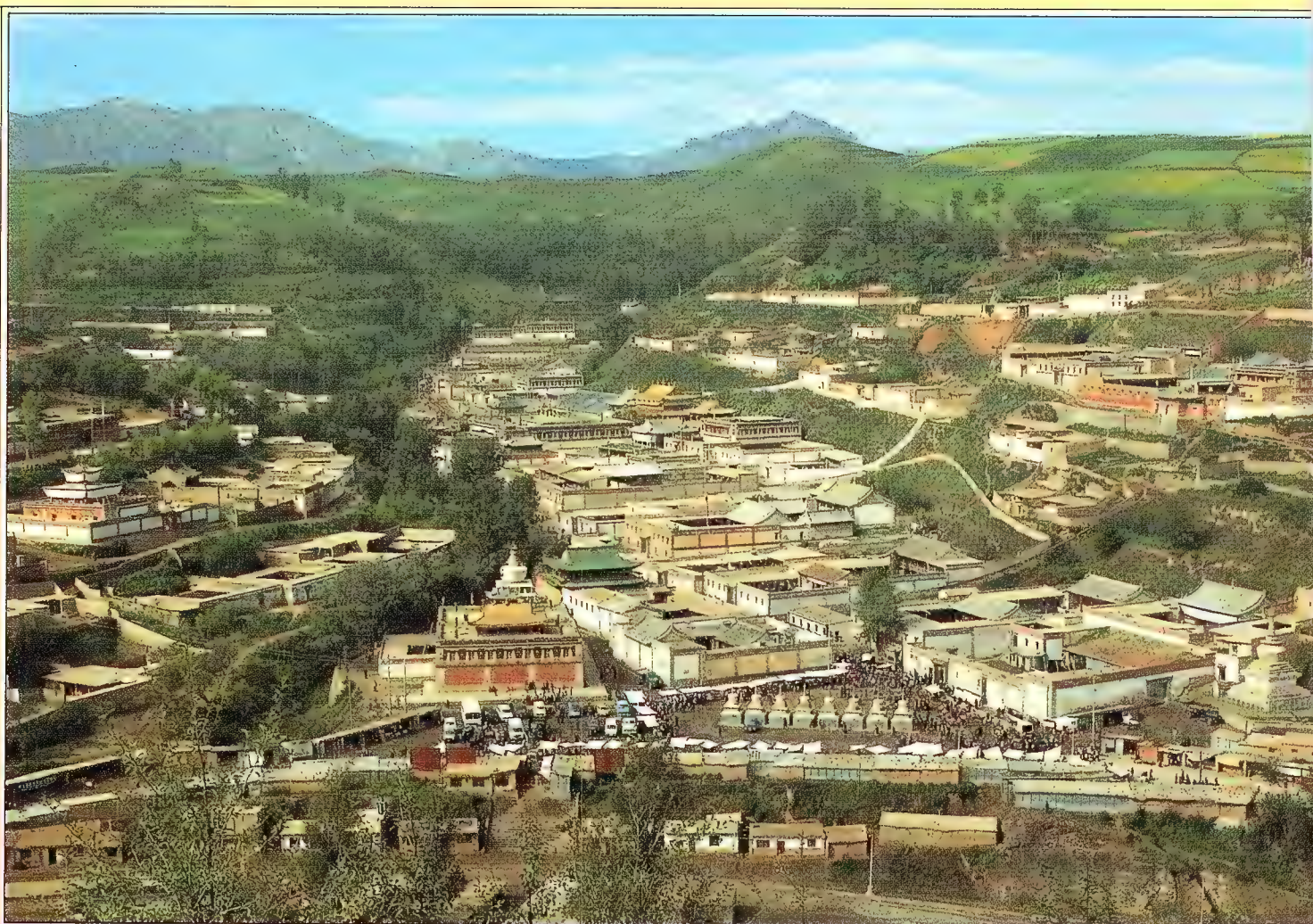
PHOTOS BY ZHENG YUNFENG  
ARTICLE BY HUANG YAN

Located in Huangzhong County half an hour's drive from Xining, the Ta'er Lamasery is one of the six great monasteries of the Yellow Sect of Tibetan Buddhism. Its name in Tibetan is *Kumbumhsienbalin*, meaning 'Maitreya Monastery of 100,000 Buddhas'. Founded in 1560 during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), it was renovated and extended during the Ming and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties. In the mid-nineteenth century it housed almost 4,000 monks and lamas. It encompasses 1,000 courtyards and 4,500 halls, temples and sleeping quarters and covers forty hectares of a long hill slope.

This lamasery is world-renowned for its unique blend of Tibetan and Chinese architecture, its religious relics and its *objets d'art*. It presents itself as a complex of dazzling gilded roofs, of elegant pavilions and temples, stupas and galleries. The major structures are the Dajinwa (Big Golden Tiled) Hall, the Xiaojinwa (Small Golden Tiled) Hall, the Dajingtang (Great Scripture Hall),

the Jiujian (Nine-Room) Hall and the eight Ruyi Stupas or chortens (a *ruyi* is an S-shaped auspicious symbol) — eight for the eight major events in the life of Gautama Buddha.

Historical records relate that the monastery was erected at the place where Tsong Khapa (1357-1419), the great master and founder of the Yellow Sect, was born. It is said that, at the age of seventeen, Tsong Khapa left home and went deep into Tibet in search of a Buddhist master to teach him the ways of virtue. His quest kept him away from home for twenty years. Yearning for her son, his mother asked a friend to take him a letter containing a strand of her hair, now grey. But Tsong Khapa refused to be diverted from his goal. He replied, apologizing for his absence, and asking her to erect a stupa at the exact spot where he was born. A statue of Buddha should be installed in the stupa and a Bodhi tree planted there (some say Tsong Khapa's afterbirth is buried below the tree). In 1378 his





mother carried out his instructions. Over time the sacred site developed into the present complex as disciples and patrons added more structures and as the Yellow Sect became the dominant force in Tibetan Buddhism.

### Yak Butter Sculptures

It is impossible to see the Ta'er Lamasery properly in a single day. The tight schedule most tourists are subject to only allows enough time to visit the focal points. But a visit to the Lower Suyouhua (Butter Sculpture) Courtyard not far from the main gate should certainly not be omitted.

Tibetans have a long history of moulding yak butter to make decorative figures or sculptures. In 641 Princess Wencheng of the Tang dynasty journeyed all the way from Chang'an (present-day Xi'an) to Tibet to marry the ruler, Songtsan Gambo, as a gesture of peace and goodwill. One of the treasures she took with her was a statue of Sakyamuni. Many a

flower was sculpted from butter and placed before the statue as an offering. Gradually, Tibetans began to fashion ever more complicated designs from yak butter which they mixed with natural minerals to make different colours: apart from large-scale statues, they produced entire tableaux illustrating stories about Buddha's incarnations, religious personages, legendary heroes, as well as a bevy of birds and animals.

In view of the dry, cold weather conditions up on the Qinghai Plateau, there is no risk of butter melting and the natural pigments never fade, so Ta'er Lamasery is particularly famous for its intricate butter sculptures. One in the Lower Suyouhua Courtyard contains hundreds of figures crowded into a limited space. Thanks to the ingenious composition and use of a sort of 'bird's eye-view' approach, the overall effect is powerfully three-dimensional.

The buildings in this courtyard have slanting roofs with double eaves. Carved glazed tiles in gorgeous colours can be seen inside and outside the courtyard. Some bear inscriptions carved in both Chinese and Tibetan. Others are embellished with flower motifs of a highly decorative nature.

### Memories of the Ninth Panchen Lama

Nearby is Xiaojinwa Hall. Built in 1631, it had to wait until 1802 in the Qing dynasty for the glazed tiles on its roof to be replaced by the gilt bronze ones which now grace it.

You enter the hall through a pavilion with upturned eaves in the Han Chinese style. The hall itself has a flat Tibetan roof and its brown walls are decorated with bronze mirrors. In the centre of the hall several dozen lokapalas

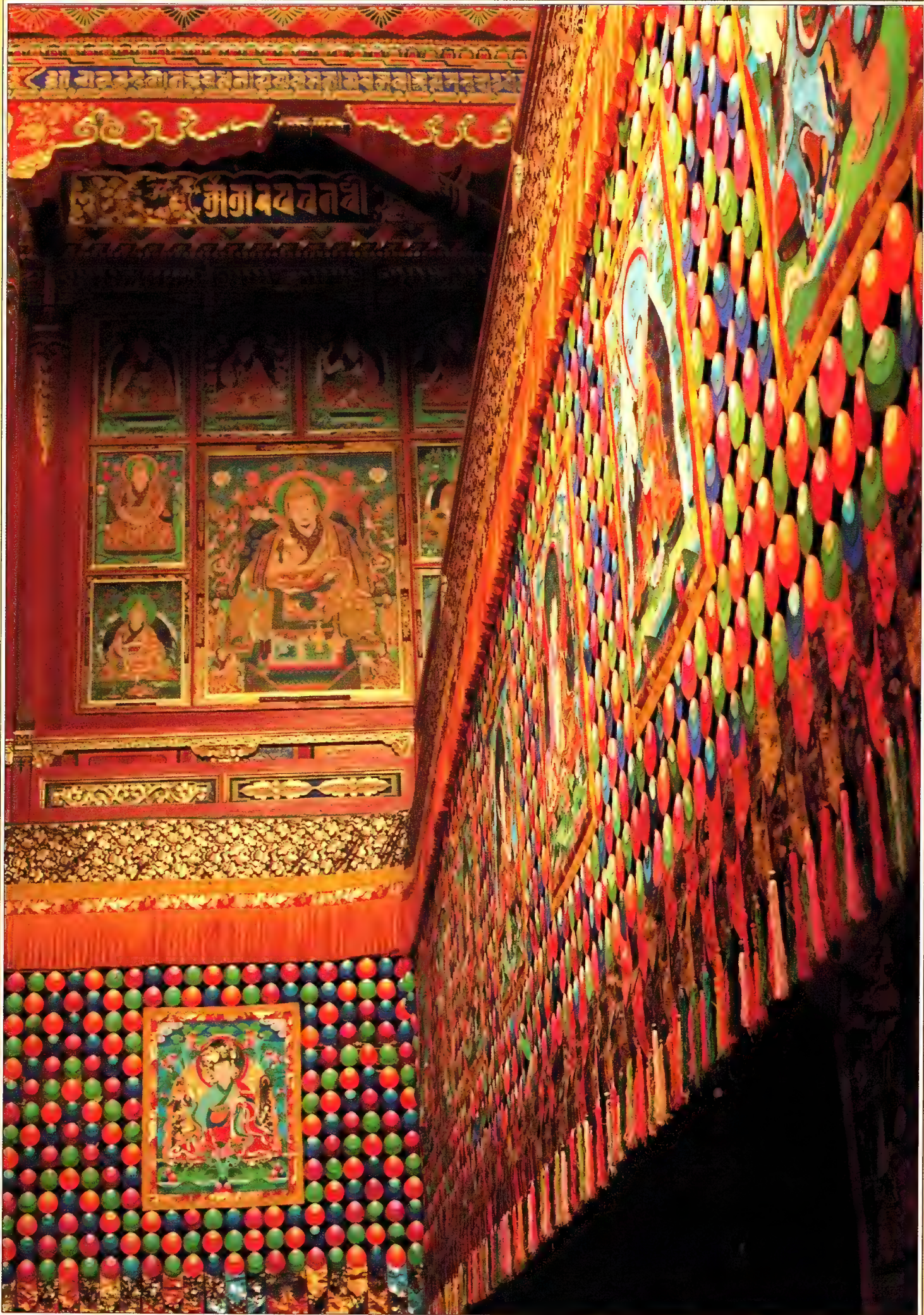
(guardians of the four points of the compass) are displayed, their strange postures adding to the solemnity and mystery of the atmosphere.

The gallery on the first floor contains a 'mini-zoo' of stuffed animals: black bear, wild ox, gazelle, yak, monkey and horse. The bear, when small, was the boyhood pet of the Ninth Panchen Lama, Chhoekyi-Nyima (1883-1937). The bear eventually died of old age and was stuffed to remind pious followers of its master. The horse is also imbued with meaning, since the Panchen Lama is said to have ridden it from Xigaze to the Ta'er Lamasery in one day — a distance of 2,000 kilometres. As it is believed to have magical powers, the horse is decorated

*Ta'er Lamasery (1) boasts vivid wall-paintings (2) and exquisite layered embroidery (3).*











2



3



4



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Brilliance of colour typifies the Dajingtang (1), but the lamasery's butter sculptures (2, 3) and wood carvings (4, 5) are no less flamboyant.



with coloured streamers and *hata* (silk scarves proffered as a mark of respectful greeting).

### Strong Visual Impact

The heart of Ta'er Lamasery, Dajinwa Hall was built in 1379. Originally just a simple, tiled-roof structure, it was rebuilt with donations collected from six Tibetan tribes living in the general vicinity around the Tsong Khapa memorial stupa, which now stands in the centre of the hall. The two-storeyed, double-roofed hall covers 4,500 square metres and is a magnificent sight. In 1740, a further donation of 27,000 taels of silver from the Tibetan ruler of the time made it possible to replace the existing roof by gilt bronze tiles two years later.

The memorial stupa is a silver structure eight metres high and marks the exact birthplace of the eminent monk. It contains a gilt bronze statue of Tsong Khapa and Buddhist sutras which he copied himself. The wooden floor in front of the stupa is polished to a shine

and a few places have even worn hollow where countless devotees have prostrated themselves over the centuries, often covering their hands with felt pads so that they would slide more easily.

The statue is flanked by ornate wooden carvings representing legendary sea monsters, elephants and snow lions, all demonstrating exquisite and exacting craftsmanship.

The walls of Dajinwa Hall are adorned with scenes from the life of Buddha, allegories, legends and historical episodes. The paintings are not bound by limitations of time or space; the deities, monks and other characters people a surrealistic world. Individual pictures are separated by flower, plant and cloud motifs. Pavilions and terraces, animals and birds, mountains and rivers evoke the Buddhist paradise yet retain a strong human flavour. Fine strokes are used to outline objects which are then filled in with thick pigments mingled with powdered gold. The result is a happy and

exuberant contrast of brilliant colours. The visitor marvels at these scenes of a tranquil paradise, a sort of way-station along the hard road to the eventual goal of Nirvana. These wall-paintings are acknowledged to be the second outstanding feature of Ta'er Lamasery.

### Rich Decorations

In front of Dajinwa Hall stands the Dajintang, a typical Tibetan building with a flat roof. Built in 1612 in the Wanli reign of the Ming dynasty, it was destroyed by fire in 1912. The present building is a reconstruction and is used by the lamasery's monks as a place of worship and for reciting the sutras. The hall is supported by 108 pillars (a holy number), each enveloped in a woollen rug bearing coiled dragon designs. Gorgeous streamers and pennants hang vertically from the carved and painted ceiling, adding to the rich ambience. Some of the pennants exhibit a continuously repeated circular design in strong reds, yellows and





blues, looking rather like human eyes. *Thangkas* (scroll paintings on cloth), colourful but majestic, are everywhere you look.

All around too are examples of layered embroidery, the third of the lamasery's 'three treasures'. Brightly coloured silks and brocades are cut into various shapes which are padded with wool or raw cotton and glued or otherwise affixed to a cloth or linen hanging. The predominant motif in most of these is an arhat, an eminent disciple of Buddha, who stands out against a black or dark background. Silk and cotton threads and various embroidery techniques are employed to produce special visual effects impossible to achieve in any other way.

The roof of the Dajingtang is decorated with gilt bronze pennants, stupas, the Wheel of Dharma, umbrellas (token of royalty and symbol of protection of the faith), gold-plated deer and *fachuang*, stylized cylindrical representations of the Banner of

Victory, that is, victory over ignorance and death. The Wheel of Dharma signifies the unity of all things and Sakyamuni himself. Flanked by two golden deer, it symbolizes his first sermon in the deer park at Sarnath in India and thus the spread of Buddhist teachings through the ages. Some of the animal heads engraved on the *fachuang* are wonderfully clever in their execution, with the mass of the face sculpted in low relief, the eyebrows and nose in high relief.

### Religious Relics

The Jiujian Hall not far away was built in 1592 in the Wanli reign of the Ming dynasty. With its tiled roof, it is rather palatial in style. It houses five Tathagata Buddhas, or rather Vairocana, the personification of supreme wisdom, surrounded by four Tathagataś ('he who is to come').

The courtyard in front is used as a place for debating as well as for performing religious dances.

During a recent visit to Ta'er Lamasery I attended a scriptural debate. Monks sat on the ground vigorously debating certain points of Buddhist doctrine or meditated quietly apart.

In this hall I also spotted a silver container filled with a mound of *qingke* (highland barley) looking rather like a crown. This is a *manzha*, the symbol of Sumeru, the cosmic mountain. The lamasery is filled with hundreds of objects with this sort of symbolic significance.

Among the exhibits in the cultural relics section is a particularly unusual pouring vessel for ritual sprinkling of water or purification. The handle is shaped like a dragon rampant and is attached to the body of the vessel by the dragon's claws — a beautiful piece of work by an unsung craftsman/artist, like so much else in this religious centre of exceptional interest.

Translated by He Fei

*A scripture debate in session at Jiujian Hall (1); the stuffed animals in the gallery at Xiaojinwa Hall include the pet bear of the Ninth Panchen Lama (2).*









Spectacular roof decorations on the Dajingtang (1). Carved bricks and tiles in the Lower Suyouhua Courtyard (3, 5). Delicately worked pouring vessel for ritual purification (2) and a manzha (4), symbol of the cosmos.



3



4



5







# A Grand Ceremony Re-enacted

PHOTOS BY SHEN YANTAI

ARTICLE BY SHEN TIAN

**M**ount Taishan north of Tai'an in Shandong Province was not — like other mountains — considered the abode of gods, it was itself a god. Chief of the five sacred mountains, it has been revered by the Chinese since the dawn of history. According to Chinese mythology, when Pangu, creator of the universe, died after many millennia, his body disintegrated to become the sun, moon, stars, mountains, rivers.... And Mount Taishan is none other than his head! Emperors, nobles, officials and commoners have climbed to its summit, where Confucius is said to have declared: 'From Mount Taishan the world is dwarfed beneath one's feet.'

In times of peace, Chinese rulers developed the habit of celebrating *feng* and *chan* sacrifices on the mountain. *Feng* was a sacrifice offered to the gods of heaven on a round altar constructed at the summit, while *chan* was the equivalent to the gods of earth, performed on a square altar set up on a small mound at the foot of the mountain.

When I visited Tai'an last September, I found the whole city decked out with colourful bunting and in festive mood. It was the annual Taishan International Mountain-Climbing Festival, when all sorts of artistic and theatrical programmes are presented to the general public. One not to be missed was the re-enactment of the *feng* and *chan* rites celebrated by Emperor Zhenzong of the Song dynasty (960-1279).

This ceremony has had a long history in China. Mythology relates that Huangdi (the Yellow Emperor) was the first to sacrifice at Mount Taishan, but the real origins of this ceremony lie hidden in the Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties (ca. 21st century-771 B.C.). Unable to comprehend the mysteries of nature which surrounded them, early mankind tended to worship the gods of nature, of heaven and earth.



Later, emperors selected propitious occasions to sacrifice to the gods.

With the advent of the Warring States Period (475-221 B.C.), the *feng* and *chan* rites became more frequent at Taishan. Confucius, who lived not far south at Qufu, is said to have witnessed many relics of these ceremonies, including the round platforms for worshipping the heavens and the square altars for worshipping the earth. These shapes, round and square, conform with the ancient Chinese concept of the universe: round heaven, flat earth.

## Symbol of Heaven

Mount Taishan was chosen as the site for the ceremony for the simple reason that it rises 1,524 metres above sea-level, surging from the plains to vanish into the clouds. Majestic and imposing, it has been a symbol of heaven since earliest times. Emperors being considered 'true dragons', 'sons of heaven', many made the pilgrimage to Taishan to render thanks to heaven for giving them its mandate to rule. The grand ceremony also gave them the opportunity to ask the gods of heaven

and earth to grant them good fortune and longevity, prosperity for the state and peace for the people.

According to the annals, it was Shihuang of the Qin dynasty (221-207 B.C.), the first emperor, who first travelled the long distance from his capital, Xianyang in Shaanxi, to Mount Taishan to worship heaven and earth in 219 B.C. Over ten subsequent rulers performed similar rites. Emperor Wudi (reign dates 141-87 B.C.) of the Western Han dynasty made the journey no less than seven times from his

**Once inside the Daimiao (3), the imperial procession passes through Zhengyang Gate (1). Tai'an in festive mood (2).**





capital Chang'an. Centuries later, Emperor Gaozong (reign dates 649-683) of the Tang dynasty performed the rites in accordance with the wishes of Empress Wu Zetian; in addition to officials and military officers, the empress is alleged to have personally led a procession of court ladies extending about a hundred kilometres, advancing to the sacred mountain in style. Emperor Xuanzong (reign dates 712-756), also of the Tang dynasty, inaugurated the practice of making public his prayer to heaven. When he went to Mount Taishan, thousands of horses were arranged according to colour in square formations, presenting a magnificent spectacle along the imperial route.

In the Song dynasty, Emperor Zhenzong (reign dates 998-1022), who wished to keep the invading Liao forces out of southern China, took advantage of the Liao people's superstitious nature and invented a story about a dream he had of meeting the god of heaven. The deity, he said, presented him with a 'heavenly scripture' of yellow silk and told him to keep it. The emperor's intention was to make the Liao believe that his sovereignty was a direct mandate from heaven and thus intimidate them into withdrawing. In response to the 'call' of the heavenly scripture, the emperor led a grand procession from his capital Bianjing (now Kaifeng in Henan) to Taishan. The guard of honour protecting the silk scripture alone numbered no less than 1,600 men. The journey of over three hundred kilometres took forty-seven days from start to finish. During the course of the sacrificial rites people carrying colourful ribbons and balls lined the path from the foot to the top of the mountain, two steps apart. In other words, remembering that the mountain has around seven thousand steps, there must have been over three thousand people assigned just to this task. What a sight it must have been!

### From Rite to Spectacle

With all this background history firmly in my mind, I went to the Daimiao or Taishan Temple in the southwest of Tai'an. This is the starting point for the ascent of Mount Taishan. It was also the place where the Song-dynasty procession was to be re-enacted. One of the largest ancient building complexes in China after the Imperial Palace in Beijing and the Confucius Temple in Qufu, it covers 96,000 square metres and is enclosed by high walls. It is famous for its collection of steles bearing the calligraphy of all the famous personages,

imperial or otherwise, who stopped here before or after their climb.

As I approached the main hall, Tiankuang (Celestial Gift), from the Zhengyang Gate (Great Gate Facing the South), I saw a crowd of spectators. In front of the hall, which dates from 1009 and was constructed by Zhenzong, a large altar table had been set up. On it were all sorts of sacrificial vessels, offerings, ancient musical instruments and so on, and a red carpet led up to it. On both sides were numerous banners. A variety of palace and other lanterns hung below the portico, setting the atmosphere for the big moment.

At ten o'clock four men beating gongs entered through the Zhengyang Gate. The master of ceremonies proclaimed in stentorian tones: 'The good and propitious moment has come. Will Your Majesty please proceed!' Drums were beaten and ancient Chinese music echoed around the foot of Taishan, taking us back countless centuries. 'Emperor Zhenzong' now made his entrance, a crown on his head and wearing a purple 'dragon' robe. He carried the imperial jade tablet of office and was followed by a train of civil and military officials. It was an impressive sight since there were at least two to three hundred people participating.

In the company of his princes and ministers the emperor walked along the red carpet to Tiankuang Hall while the others lined the route, heads bowed in respect. Once the emperor and his retinue stood to attention before the altar, the grand ceremony could begin.

First the master of ceremonies read out a poem in praise of Mount Taishan. Then the music began again and scores of dancers appeared and performed, their movements, make-up and costumes based on historical research. A group of girl dancers followed, executing a sword dance involving very difficult steps which earned them deserved applause. Officials of the court then carried forward the 'heavenly scripture' which was read out by the actor portraying the prime minister Wang Qinruo. In return, the emperor thanked the gods of heaven.

This charming spectacle could of course in no way compare with the solemnity and significance of the real *feng* and *chan* rites dominated by the august presence of the 'son of heaven' himself.

Translated by He Fei



**The guard of honour approaches (2); imperial officials bring in the 'heavenly scripture' (1). Dancing girls delight the emperor and his court (3).**





2



3







# Masterpieces of Ningbo Wood-Carving

PHOTOS BY WANG MIAO

TEXT BY YIP CHUN YU

**T**he photos given here show examples of wooden furniture, intricately carved and finished in red and gold, found in the Tianyige Pavilion in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province. This kind of work developed after wood became popular as a building material during the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220). Later, during the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties, temples and monasteries were often decorated with wood-carvings, especially in the areas south of the River Yangtse.

The bed on the left is carved from precious woods such as camphor and ginkgo. Above the framework of the bed itself rises a sort of canopy from the top of which eaves jut out over the curving entrance. The eaves, the front panels flanking the entrance and the panels around the bed are covered with delicate bas-reliefs and perforated fretwork adorned with a thin layer of gold leaf. Under the lights the gold glitters, conjuring up splendours rivalling those of the imperial 'dragon' bed in Beijing's Forbidden City. Dark-brown lacquer was applied to areas free of carving to protect the wood.

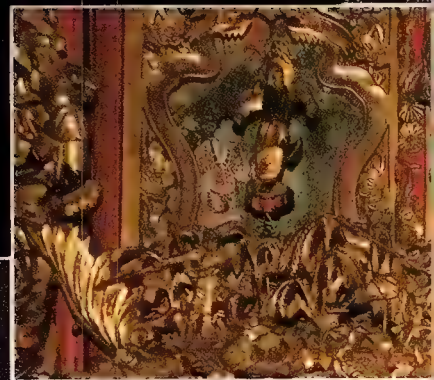
This bed dates from the early nineteenth century, that is, from the Qing dynasty. Legend has it that a rich man hired one thousand men to make this bed before his marriage, so that it is now known as the 'Thousand-Men-Carved Bed'.

As for the 'Ten-Thousand-Men-Carved Sedan Chair' shown below, this highly ornate work dates from the turn of the century. It is a

bit of an exaggeration to say that ten thousand men were employed to carve a single sedan chair; there were in fact only three thousand craftsmen involved! The carvings, mostly in a straightforward style, portray auspicious and happy events or illustrate folk tales. The multitude of human figures, pavilions, flowers, trees, birds and beasts together form a microcosm of the world.

As with the bed, the curlicues and relief designs on the sedan chair are either gilded or lacquered. But there is something extra in this case: the plain surfaces were encrusted with powdered mica and clam shells. Using a medley of decorative techniques such as spraying with gold, grinding gold and silver, dripping on powder, gold tracery and a host of others, delicate portraits were produced on a background of blue or green. The figures have eyes full of spirit and they all seem to have a happy expression and a relaxed bearing.

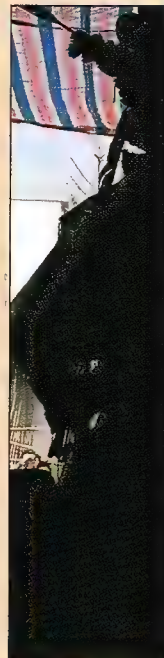
Translated by Annette Lee





# Shantou Revisited

PHOTOS BY WONG CHUNG FAI    ARTICLE BY JIANG XIA







1



2



3

**M**any hundreds of years ago, the accumulation of sediment and consequent raising of the seabed at the mouths of the rivers Hanjiang, Lianjiang and Rongjiang in eastern Guangdong Province eventually resulted in the formation of an enormous sandbank south of the alluvial plain. Fishermen started to build their homes there, and it gradually came to be called Shantou. As it was surrounded by shark-filled waters, Shantou was also known as Tuodao (Shark Island). Even today, one of the newer hotels in the city has been given the name Tuodao Binguan (Island of Sharks' Guesthouse); in English this is the Shantou Peninsula Hotel.

Now the major port in eastern Guangdong and an economic and cultural centre, Shantou is a mere stripling by comparison with its ancient neighbour Chaozhou, which can demonstrate a history of 1,700 years. Shantou only really started to become more than a fishing village around 1860, when the Qing government opened it up to international trade. The people who flocked to take part in its mercantile activities at that time came from all over China so that, at first, few could claim to be genuine natives of Shantou.

Today, with an area of 240 square kilometres and an urban population of over 700,000 (according to 1985 statistics), Shantou is the largest city in Guangdong after the capital, Guangzhou, as well as the site of one of China's special economic zones.

It was thirty years ago that I myself left Shantou to settle overseas. This Spring Festival (as the Lunar New Year is now called on the mainland), joining the flood of Chinese people returning home for this all-important annual event, I too paid a visit to the hometown that I had last seen so many years before.

There was much that was new to my eyes. Most of the old two and three-storeyed houses in Shantou are being or have been replaced by much taller buildings. And I noticed many new roads, Haibin Road, for example. But some things still remain. For instance, when I visited my ancestral home, I found its appearance had hardly changed, although the people living there were no longer my relations. Near Xiaogongyuan (Small Park) in the old section of the town, I saw houses in the familiar style. And the street scenes were much the same as they had ever been: streams of bicycles, even the odd pedicab....

### Traditions Retained

In the old days, during the New Year festivities, the people of Shantou used to kill pigs and geese, steam rice dumplings, and invite troupes to perform the local Chaozhou Opera for several days and nights in succession. By and large, these customs are still observed today and, if anything, the festival seems to create an even greater bustle than in the past. The only thing that has really changed is that the opera performance has shrunk!

*Pedicabs trawl for custom at Xiaogongyuan in the heart of the old quarter (2) where Chaozhou opera is still a great favourite on festive occasions (1). Sunset over the South China Sea (3, by André Lam). Shantou abounds in examples of modern statuary (4).*



4



Still, during my stay, Chaozhou Opera was performed all day and into the night, with spectators numerous at all times. One thing that did surprise me was that many fashionably dressed young people were also to be seen listening attentively. Obviously, the local opera tradition is still going strong.

On the eve of the festival, the explosive popping of firecrackers resounded from every street and lane. On New Year's Day itself, thick layers of red paper bits from spent firecrackers littered the streets, adding to the sense of festivity. All through this period, parades which included lion and dragon dancers could be seen wending their way through the town, young children among the performers.

Many roads in the old town are just as narrow and convoluted as they ever were. However, the effect was exaggerated at the time of the Lantern Festival staged during the first month of the lunar year. Apparently, Shantou has celebrated this on a large scale during the last two years and it attracts vast crowds of people. To escape the congestion, I walked east along Waima Road, where I was struck by the many new constructions. Among them was the Shantou Taiwan Hotel opposite the Xinhua Cinema, presumably a place which sees many visitors from Taiwan nowadays.

As I went further east, the road seemed to become wider and cleaner. When I came to Fuhecheng, in the modern city centre, I couldn't help noticing the appetizing smell. This is a centre for stalls selling the traditional snacks of the Chaozhou and Shantou area, the place to try Shantou's famous oyster omelette, glutinous rice dumplings, stir-fried rice noodles, beef balls, stewed goose in a thick, sweetish sauce, etc. To tell the truth, I had hardly expected to be so lucky as to find all my old favourites still being sold in just the same way after all those years.

### Longhu Special Economic Zone

Shantou's special economic zone actually consists of two areas: Longhu and Guang'ao. The former, 22.6 square kilometres in area, located northeast of the new city centre, was developed only a few years ago on flat wasteland beside the sea, while the latter, covering thirty square kilometres, is on Haodao Island south of the city. Being both a special economic zone and an open coastal city, Shantou has had to build numerous new hotels to accommodate visiting business executives. These include the Shantou International Hotel, Longhu Guesthouse and the earlier-mentioned Shantou Peninsula Hotel. All of these are located on the wide, straight Jinsha Road which leads out to the Longhu zone. The Shantou International Hotel is the tallest, largest building in the city, and even has a revolving restaurant on its top floor.

The special economic zone seems to be much busier than the older areas of the city. Here I saw any number of hotels, offices, supermarkets and, of course, factories and industrial buildings. I noticed that the female workers all seemed to pay great attention to their looks. Many wore cosmetics, and some had even had coloured streaks put in their hair!



*Shantou's contemporary lifestyle: followers of fashion (1, by André Lam), child performers at the New Year parade (2, by Luo Bin; 4, by Zhang Qun). The new Shantou Taiwan Hotel (5) and detail of fountain representing the city's symbol, the flame tree (3).*







4



5









2



Another new sight for me in China was a sauna offering massage services. Fitted out and decorated in a Western style, the sauna was the result of a one-million-yuan investment by a British businessman of Chinese origin. Though the sauna's charges seemed exorbitant, I was told it attracts a lot of custom every night.

The people of Shantou do, in general terms, seem to have considerable spending power. Certainly, visitors have much more to spend their money on than formerly.

### Memories of the Past

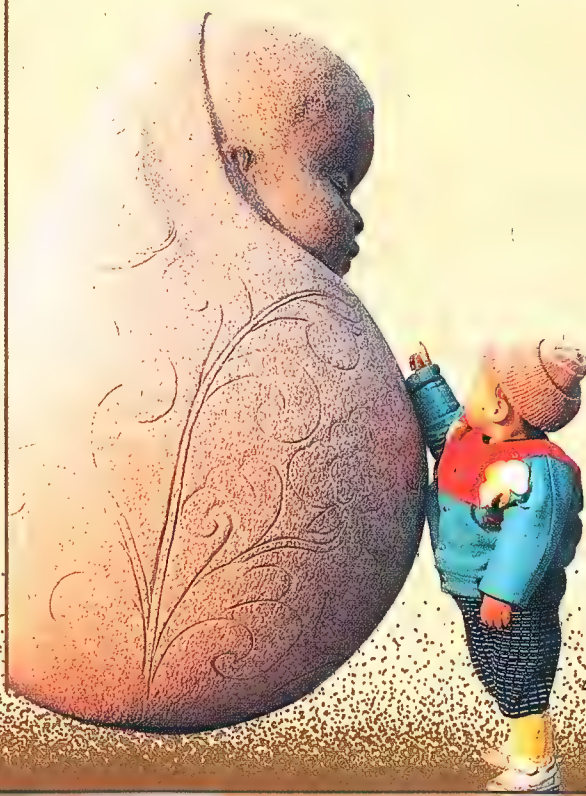
Water was channelled from the River Hanjiang to form a circular moat around the well-known Zhongshan (Sun Yat-sen) Park north of the oldest part of the town. There are three bridges across the moat leading into and out of the extensive (210,000 square metres) park complex, creating a variety of landscapes.

Standing on Yuemei (Crescent) Bridge, I saw a number of boats moored nearby. The boats were stacked with colourful pots of flowers, while customers stood on the bank haggling with the vendors at the top of their voice. It was the time of year when the flower-growers in the suburbs gather here to sell their produce, which is always in great demand around the Lunar New Year.

In fact, there was a surprising amount of traffic along the banks of the Hanjiang. Every now and then I espied a pedicab of a type in vogue decades ago! Some of the drivers were young and strong. As taxis are still rare in Shantou, these old pedicabs have an important role to play in the life of the city.

Xinghua (Apricot Blossom) Bridge over a wider branch of the river gave me a shock. The ancient bridge is no longer as I remembered it. As, in recent years, the original had proved unable to cope with the vastly increased traffic volume, it has been doubled in width. From the bridge, I watched motor boats scurrying to and fro. Suddenly several large bamboo rafts came into sight, slowly drifting downstream. Each had a crew of two; the man at the front poled, while the one at the rear held the rudder, which was of bamboo like the rest of the craft. The body of the raft was made up of bamboos being transported from the mountainous regions upstream (the Hanjiang, the second

*The fishing industry still plays an important role (1, by Amy Chan), while the floating flower market flourishes near Yuemei Bridge (3, by Zhang Qun). The old herbal teashop (2, by Raymond Lai), and like calls to like (4)!*





longest river in Guangdong, is the lower course of a river system which rises in the Wuyi Mountains in western Fujian). Once in Shantou, they would be transhipped further afield.

On the spot, my mind was flooded with memories of my childhood. I used to spend a lot of my free time playing in the Hanjiang. I would clamber up on to the bamboo rafts as they passed to take a breather before jumping back into the cool, calm waters for more....

My grandfather's old home was located just outside the city. The road leading to the house, a muddy path in the past, is now a proper asphalt road. From the city it is only ten minutes by car to the fishing village on the coast where the house still stands. Now, of course, the people who live there are strangers.

However, the distinctive smell of the breeze blowing off the sea and the murmur of the waves dredged up from the depths of my memory incidents from times when I visited my grandparents as a child. To my astonishment, the old herbal tea shop called Tiandiquan (Spring of Heaven and Earth) was still there, looking very little different from thirty years ago. I ordered a bowl of herbal tea and found it as bitter as ever!

### Interior-Painted Snuff-Bottles

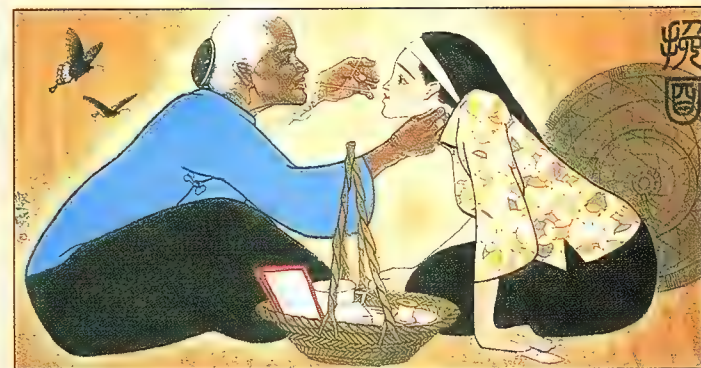
I remember that, on the rocks by the shore, there used to be many shrines. These have all vanished. However, there is still a supernatural presence of sorts in the village: carvings of wide-mouthed imps guard the gables of houses there day and night.

Once a separate fishing village, this place is now just another Shantou suburb. I visited an exhibition of paintings on local customs in the cultural museum which has been built there. One of the paintings illustrated the old practice of *wanmian*, 'face cleaning'. When a woman got married in the past, an older woman would come and remove the down on her face, plucking it with two pieces of thread. This signified that she had become a full member of her husband's family. Thereafter she would have her face treated in this way once a month until she died. Although it has largely lapsed, this practice can still be seen among the older generation in, for example, Hong Kong.

As old customs disappear, new things replace them. Shantou has turned in a big way to producing handicrafts, some of them new, others just new to Shantou. Interior-painted snuff-bottles, for instance, have only been produced in this area for a dozen or so years but go back many centuries elsewhere in China. This demands true skill. First, the interior of a snuff-bottle must be ground by hand then, using a specially designed brush which he inserts into the bottle mouth only as large across as a soybean, the craftsman paints flowers, birds, landscapes or figures in traditional style. All this inside a bottle which may be only six centimetres tall! It is not surprising that a good snuff-bottle of this type can sell for up to 10,000 yuan.

A craft with a longer tradition in Shantou is stone-carving. I had often seen a pair of giant stone lions on Shantou flanking the entrance to Chinese companies, banks and so on abroad. And, of course, such work is very evident in Shantou itself.

Translated by W. Lau



**Auspicious symbols on the wall of an ancestral temple (1, by Raymond Lai) and an imp on a more humble gable (4, by Amy Chan). The 'face cleaning' illustrated has largely died out (3), but interior-painted snuff-bottles are a prized export item (2). Still a common sight on the Hanjiang: a bamboo raft (5, by André Lam).**











# New Haven in an Old Port: The Shantou International Hotel

PHOTOS BY WONG CHUNG FAI  
TEXT BY TIAN HUO

**A** hundred and thirty years ago, Shantou was just a small fishing harbour on Guangdong's eastern seaboard. But with the development of trade, particularly with Western merchants, in nearby countries and regions from around 1860, Shantou became the largest port in eastern Guangdong, and was designated as one of China's special economic zones in 1982.

As more and more businessmen from overseas flock to China, new hotels are springing up all over the country. Shantou is no exception.



Photo above by courtesy of Lee Gardens Hotel; photo opposite by André Lam



The Shantou International Hotel, located in the new part of the city, is currently — with its twenty-six storeys — the tallest building in eastern Guangdong. This joint-venture hotel, which opened in 1988, offers the highest standards of accommodation and service.

## Modern Yet Majestic

As it was the height of the sultry summer, the cool air which enfolded me was a welcome relief as I entered the hotel's lobby. On either side rose an enormous gleaming column of stainless steel, while the walls and floor were faced with marble. The whole area exuded a sense of cool and calming comfort.

A massive gold and silver chandelier formed the eye-catching focal point of the atrium. I was told that the design of this chandelier, at first sight futuristic, was actually modelled on the traditional palace lanterns of imperial China. Over 20,000 artificial crystal beads had gone into the manufacture of this decorative piece imported from Czechoslovakia.









As I checked in, I realized that the large wall-hanging behind the reception counter was in fact a bold abstract rug. It depicted the cataclysmic legendary separation of the earth from the heavens ... or, at least, that's what it looked like to me!

The hotel has four hundred rooms, including the VIP Suite on the nineteenth floor. Hung with classical Western-style oil paintings, the suite is exquisitely finished — down to the taps in the bathroom, which are gold-plated! Such luxurious accommodation was not for me, but the standard guestrooms are very comfortable and equipped with every amenity.

Indeed, the range of general facilities is what one would expect from a world-class hotel and includes same-day laundry service, beauty salon, shopping arcade, foreign exchange, clinic and tour counter. Given its location, the hotel's emphasis is on the business traveller as much as the tourist, so of course it boasts a fully equipped business centre and a number of meeting rooms.

#### Local Cuisine

The restaurants here deserve special mention. The Fragrant Court is on the third floor, and enjoys panoramic views over the busy port of Shantou. It specializes in the cuisine(s) of Guangdong. When I was there, almost all the waitresses were wearing the traditional *qipao* (cheongsam) with high slit skirts. The exceptions were two girls from Yunnan who were dressed in the colourful Bai national costume.

Then there is the Han Jiang Chun which offers local Chaozhou (Chiu Chow) specialties, including stewed goose in a thick, sweetish sauce and a variety of succulent and super-fresh seafood. Another glamorous dining venue is the Palace Revolve, Shantou's first and so far only revolving restaurant, perched on the top floor of the hotel. With outstanding views over Shantou's old town and harbour, it concentrates on Western cuisine.

For after-dinner entertainment, the scene moves to the Xanadu Discotheque. I noticed a strange and thought-provoking fact: the dancers there were much more restrained than in similar places in Shenzhen and Guangzhou.

The hotel is fronted by a large courtyard. Fountains with sparkling coloured lights welcome the visitor by day or night, along with the obligatory pair of stone lions in the imperial style. The garden contains a large wall relief showing famous historical sights in Shantou and Chaozhou, executed in an archaic, Han-dynasty style.

The designers of this attractive hotel certainly understood how to mingle the best of East and West.

Translated by W. Lau



Photo by André Lam





# Island of Music

PHOTOS BY WONG CHUNG FAI    TEXT BY CHI YI





One of the prettiest sights along the coast of Fujian Province lies just off-shore of the city of Xiamen. Located less than a ten-minute ride by ferry across the 700-metre-wide strait from the pier opposite the Lujiang Hotel in Xiamen, Gulangyu Island is nicknamed 'Garden on the Sea'. It is small, just 1.78 square kilometres in area. Called Yuanshazhou (Round Sandbar) from the Song dynasty (960-1279) onwards — when it really was just a sandbar — its name Gulangyu dates from the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), and comes from the sound like a drum (*gu*) made by the waves (*lang*) crashing into a cave at the island's southwestern corner at high tide.

Topped by the ninety-metre-high Sunlight Rock, from which one gets the best views over the island, Xiamen and the

harbour, subtropical Gulangyu is known for its abundance of trees and flowers; the special flower of Xiamen is the bougainvillea, and it is well represented on the island. Gulangyu is also famed for its numerous nineteenth-century buildings in the European style, a legacy of Xiamen's days as a treaty port from 1842, when the island became the location of churches, residential villas and no less than fourteen foreign consulates. And the third and perhaps most intriguing aspect? Its residents' love of music! The island's peace — all vehicles, including bicycles, are forbidden — is often complemented by the sound of a piano or violin being played, and no small number of China's better-known contemporary musicians are said to come from here.

Pianos can be seen in many households, and are their pride and joy. In fact, Gulangyu is claimed to have the largest concentration of pianos in China.







The island's Shaoniangong (Youth Palace), a recreational centre for young people and children, provides instruction in piano, accordion, guitar, *erhu* (a traditional two-stringed Chinese instrument), dulcimer, etc. These classes are so popular that some students end up being tutored out in the corridors. Pupils may be as young as five or six, and many a nine or ten-year-old is capable of tackling works at the level of difficulty of a violin concerto, whether by a Western or a Chinese composer.

The local boast is that almost every household on Gulangyu has someone able to play a musical instrument to a reasonable standard. A popular local entertainment is to ask a few friends over for an impromptu mini-concert comprising five or six people, especially at festivals and on special occasions.

Residents relate that any major musical event staged at the island's concert hall produces a mad rush on the ticket counter. Why is music so much a part of the island's cultural life? Nobody knows really, although it has been like this as far back as people can remember. But it must have something to do with the peace and quiet, the unhurried atmosphere, and the general elegance and beauty of the environment.



Translated by M.K.





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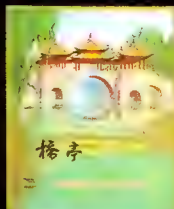
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# Go For Action

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"Dragon-fly" badminton shoes have been manufactured by the Beijing No. 1 Rubber Factory since 1971. The factory had developed more varieties of products over the past years and from time to time efforts had also been made to upgrade the product quality. Shoes made by the factory include two categories, those with mould-pressed soles and those with roller-made soles. The shoes come in a wide range of variety including badminton shoes, tennis shoes, basketball shoes, volleyball shoes and field and track shoes.

Among the numerous varieties, "Dragon-fly" 4602A badminton shoes are specially developed for Chinese badminton players taking part in international tournaments. Made of the finest materials with elaborate workmanship, they are comfortable, springy and wear-resisting, they have become favourite footwear for athletes at home and abroad. The Chinese national badminton team has won several important international competitions including the Thomas Cup in 1982 and the Uber Cup in 1983. The success of the badminton team is to a large extent attributed to the "Dragon-fly" badminton shoes they wore.

"Dragon-fly" badminton shoes are now sold to Southeast Asia, Africa and Europe. They have established ready markets in these regions. We welcome businessmen from all over the world to do business with us. Please contact our office for details and orders.

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例如蜻蜓牌4602 A 羽毛球鞋，由高明技師特為國家羽毛球運動員專門設計，經過幾十次試穿和改進方確定楦型，選料優良，造工精細，堅固耐用，彈性好，穿著舒適，適應各種動作，成為羽毛球運動專門體育用品，為國內外羽毛球愛好者所喜愛。中國羽毛球隊自參加國際比賽以來，曾多次奪魁，並於一九八二年、一九八四年、一九八六年分別奪得湯姆斯杯和尤伯杯，如此神功，亦與選用蜻蜓牌羽毛球鞋有密切關係。

蜻蜓牌羽毛球鞋，深受外國朋友喜愛，蜻蜓牌各種球鞋已經近銷東南亞國家，遠銷非洲、歐洲。目前爭購訂貨已是供不應求。今後將繼續努力，增加花色品種，適應國際市場的各種需求。



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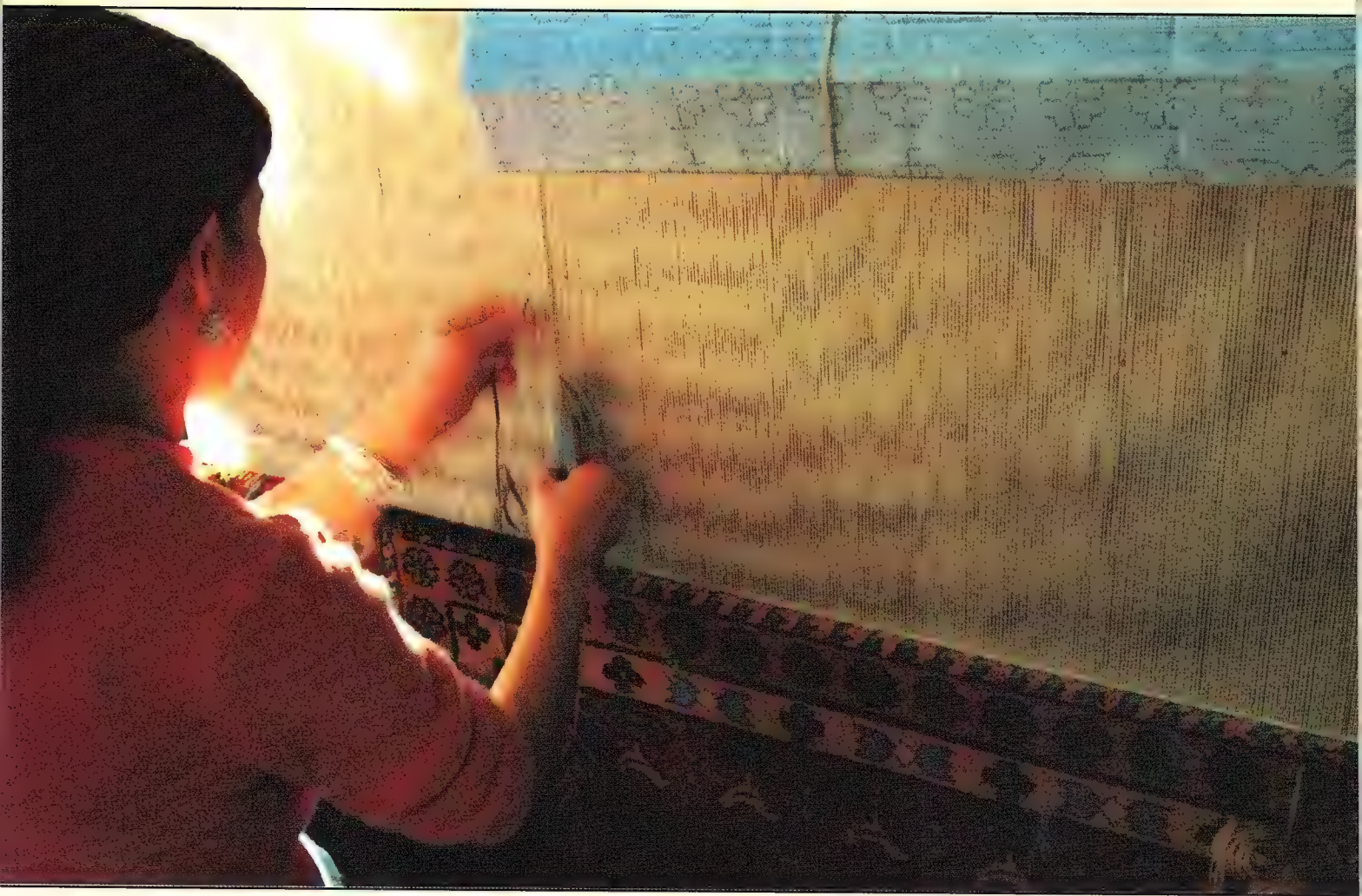






A study in pure  
motion: horses race  
at a breakneck  
gallop across the  
Xinjiang plain,  
snow-capped mountains  
in the background....

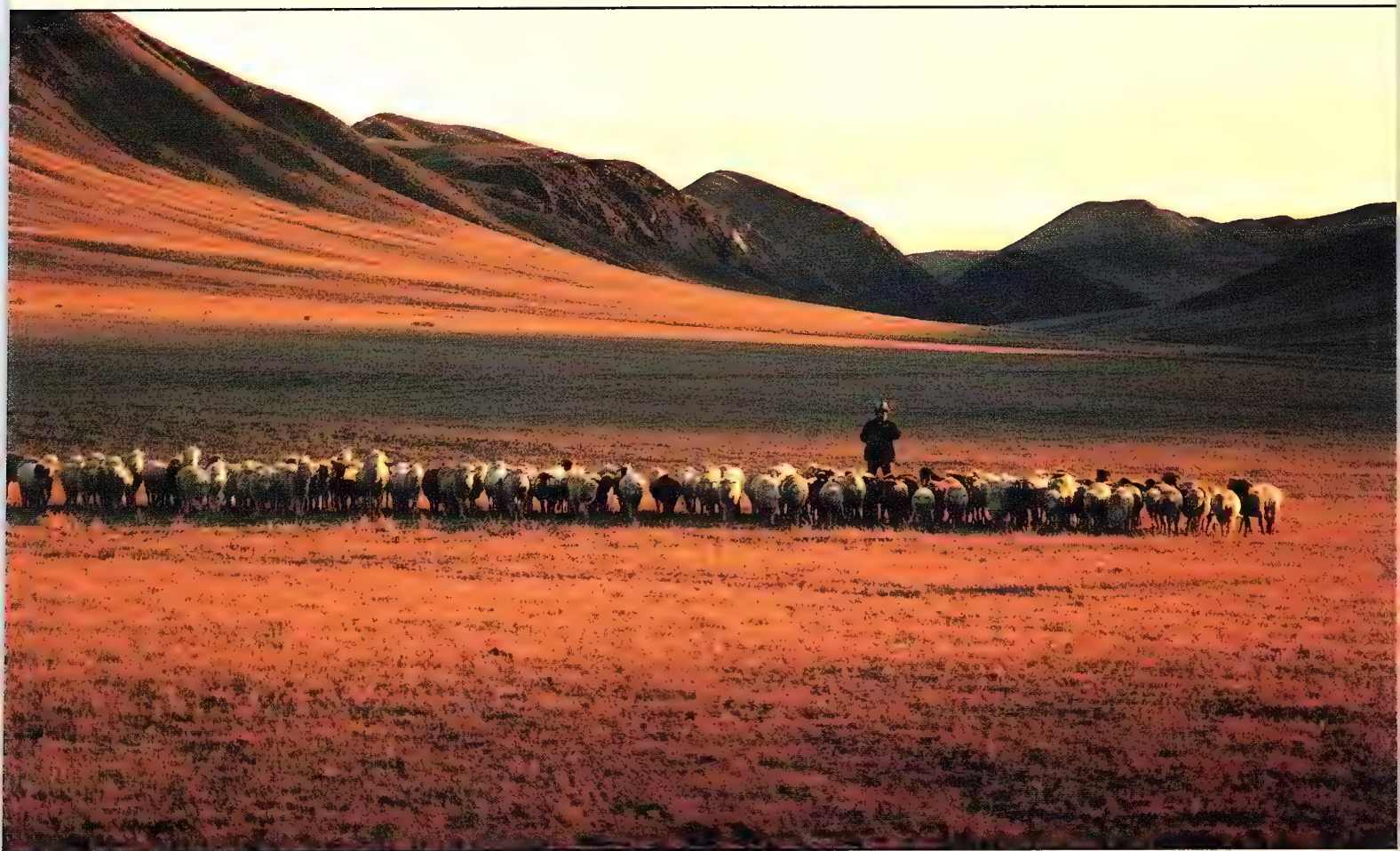




A Xinjiang weaver knots and cuts skilfully, making a fine wool carpet according to a complicated pattern she has calculated carefully beforehand.



At first light, as the sun's  
rays gradually slide down to  
the broad sweep of the  
valley floor, a shepherd and  
his flock face up to another  
day of grazing. 





# A Minority Medley

**G**uizhou is a repository of the cultures of around twelve peoples, in addition to the Han Chinese. The individual origin, history and heritage of these peoples is expressed in the way they dress, in their skills and crafts such as embroidery and silverwork, in their music and dance ... and in poetry. Those whose lore has largely been passed down by word of mouth are particularly receptive to feelings or information imparted in poetic or sung form, and skill of improvisation in poetry and song plays a great role in the social life of many of these minorities. A guest may be called upon to respond to a poetic toast made up on the spot by his host while, in antiphonal singing, especially where one side is female, the other male, a witty and apt response is required instantaneously to counter any jibe or tease.

We present here a small selection from a collection of minority folk poems made in 1962 and lovingly translated by Rewi Alley (1897-1987), the New Zealander who made China his home and is known especially for his work in organizing industrial cooperatives in many parts of the country.

The Yi poem is a reflection of the harshness of life for many under the old slave society dominated by the Black Yi. From the Bouyei nationality comes a description in song of the process of growing indigo to make the batik for which that people is famous. Love songs, whether sad or happy, are timeless. We have taken slight licence in including the Yao example since, although there are around 20,000 Yao in Guizhou, they do not live in the area covered in our Special Features this month. Still, this poem is so evocative we were unable to resist it. Happy reading!

Translated by Rewi Alley

Selected from *Folk Poems from China's Minorities*, published by New World Press, Beijing

## Collecting Indigo

### Bouyei Folk Song

Up in the hills the Yangchueh bird calls; spring thunder rattles down the valleys, so now we Bouyei folk ought to be out planting indigo.

Every hillside, every hilltop and from all the valleys comes the sound of hoes striking stones everyone out to plant indigo.

Then when plants have been put out, surrounding them with branches of thorns, three circles of them, so that the wild pigs will not push snouts through or pheasants come to peck at the tender plants.

The third month is gone and the fourth month comes in with the indigo putting out leaves so green and sturdy.

Our indigo grows well and we come with hoes to clear away the weeds, then cutting back wild grasses too.

The fifth month brings good rains and in the sixth the indigo has grown higher than a man; the seventh month is hot, and indigo is ready for cutting.

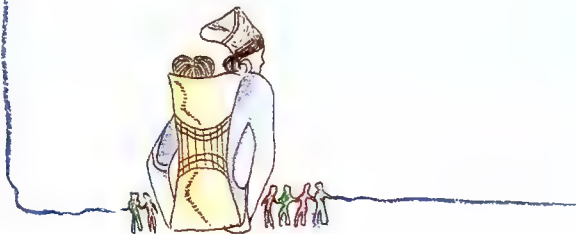
With the eighth month, all come with bamboo baskets to harvest indigo; this done it is soaked in wooden tubs then when retted, moved on to stone ones.

In these tubs it stays just three days and three nights water becoming as green as the water of the Dragon Pool; when you look into the tub you can see your reflection well.

Then on market days we go down to buy lime, until every family has its pile ready; amongst it some not well burnt stones; best to use only the finer powder.

Lime powder mixed into the indigo vats, then the water becomes a still more vivid green; now it is ready to dye all the newly woven homespun.

New clothes dyed so blue, bluer than even the sky; all are happy wearing new clothing; the old men wear new clothes, and go down to the market to buy odds and ends; the old women wear and go out visiting their relations; lads wear them and go out to make love, lasses likewise.





## Autumn Leaves

Yao

Lightly comes a little wind  
soughing through the pines  
rising like some ocean tide;  
one after another red leaves  
fall, dropping on to the blue cloth  
of a Yao girl as she sits  
embroidering, the flowers  
she creates laughing back  
at her; now tumbling  
red leaves lighting on cloth  
make all seem lovelier;

red leaves, ah! fall softly!  
embroidered flowers, use  
all your laughter; the lass  
already has a lover, useless  
to longer hide it!



## Slave's Lament

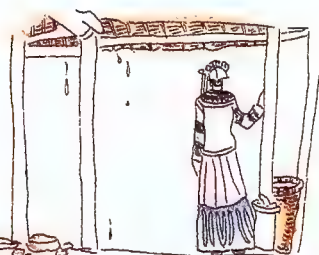
A Yi Poem

Other girls no bigger than I  
are still like lambs, day and night  
beside their mother's side; yet I  
when still small, had my body stolen  
and taken to the house of a slave owner;  
bullets that hit the hillside  
cannot return to the rifle again  
a child going from home to a slave owner  
can hardly return to its mother's side;  
up on the steep hills the worst land  
can at least grow buckwheat  
even though my mother's home was so poor  
never would I have left it; when flowers  
begin to fade, so is it then the butterflies  
love them most; in autumn cattle love  
best the grasses just before they fade;  
though mother was so old, yet I as a child  
loved her most of all things in my life;  
mother, now in the daytime I shepherd sheep  
the deep snow closing over my feet; each dawn  
I am down at the riverside carrying up water  
the ice that sticks to my legs tinkling  
like a bell as I walk; the slave owner's whip  
curls like a snake over my back; when winds  
blow

I clasp a lamb to my breast to hold the  
warmth;

by night lying with the big dog by the doorway  
to keep off the cold; when I am homesick  
for mother, I imagine the cuckoo answers  
for her, or the cicadas — but with night  
their voices are silent, and then through  
the darkness I imagine her voice in the sound  
of the rainwater that drips so heavily  
from the roof, thinking how the years of my  
life

flow past even faster than do these raindrops  
fall.



## In the Midst of Green a Spot of Red

Miao Folk Poem

A file of lasses ten li long  
going out to the fields, silver ornaments  
clinking together as they go, the sound  
of their songs rising together; and  
the rice is planted as if they  
were laying a carpet of green, with  
the red of their clothing making  
a bright pattern between.

## Words and Hearts Different

Miao Folk Poem

Give me cotton to spin yarn  
then I spin! Then the yarn breaks  
and I look to see whether  
the spindle is broken, or the cotton  
bad; broken yarn can easily  
be joined, but if the hearts  
of any two are not the same, then  
better to let them remain apart. ☞



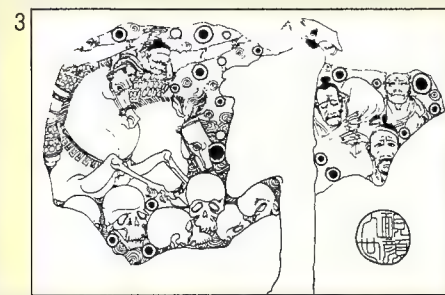




1 Xi Jian was born during the troubled and turbulent Jin dynasty (265-420). A studious, industrious child, he was raised in the country and soon acquired a reputation for learning which earned him wide respect.



2 This reputation came to the ears of Sima Lun, Prince of Zhao and brother of the emperor. He summoned Xi Jian to court and made him an official. But, having discovered that Sima Lun harboured ambitions towards the throne himself, Xi soon left his employ again and went home.



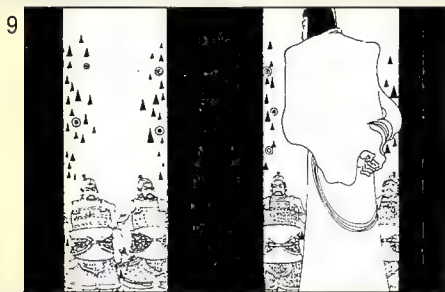
3 Sima Lun did in fact succeed in overthrowing his brother, and his officials all became ministers. But Xi Jian stayed resolutely away, refusing to receive people who, in his eyes, were traitors. There followed sixteen years of bitter warfare between the eight princes of the Sima family, devastating the country and leaving millions of people homeless.

## Xi Jian — Loyalty Incarnate

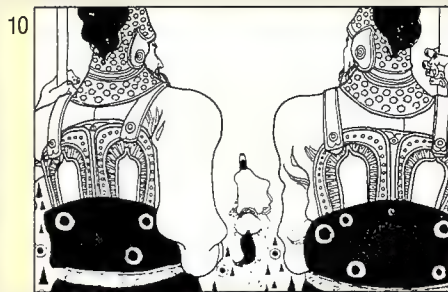
DRAWINGS BY LU YANGUANG  
TEXT BY XU XINGQUAN

**T**he idiomatic saying *Tian Yan Ren Shi* (How can you live in the world, having lost all moral integrity?) comes from the *Book of Jin* compiled by Tang historians in the seventh century. Still used in a literary context, the phrase is attributed to Xi Jian, who proved loyal to his emperor and resisted the perfidy of Wang Dun, a general plotting the emperor's overthrow.

Taken from the 'Stories of Chinese Proverbs' series published by the People's Fine Arts Publishing House, Shanghai



9 Wang Dun was not at all appreciative of Xi Jian's comments.... In fact, he was furious and promptly threw him in jail. Xi Jian showed no fear, although he knew his position was perilous.



10 The general's officers advised him to kill Xi Jian, but he hesitated to take such a drastic step. After all, this was a person held in general esteem who had been summoned by the emperor. Eventually, after a few days, Xi Jian was released.

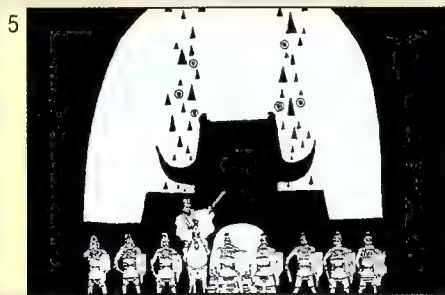


11 Once back in the capital, Xi Jian received orders to prepare troops and lay in provisions to withstand an attack from Wang Dun. Within a year, the latter had persuaded his generals and his brother Wang Han to join him in an attempt against the emperor.

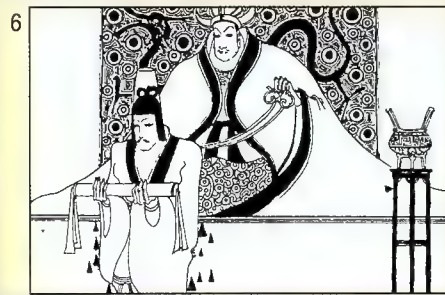




With the Jin government paralyzed, the Xiongnu, northern nomads, invaded the region of the Huanghe (Yellow River). This provoked a reaction from Sima Rui, another member of the royal family. In 317, as Emperor Yuandi, he re-established the dynasty, installed his capital at Nanjing and appointed Xi Jian general.



But almost at once the Jin regime was faced with another menace, this time from its own general-in-chief, Wang Dun, who was planning a coup. In 323, following the death of Sima Rui, the latter's son Sima Shao ascended the throne and tried to sabotage Wang Dun's plans by sending Xi Jian to Anhui to keep an eye on the troublemaker.



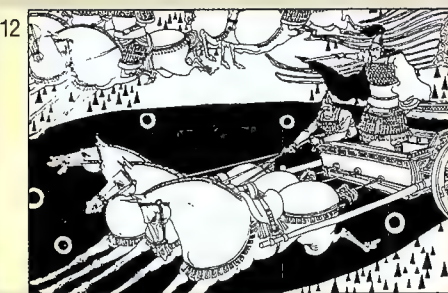
Wang Dun realized what was happening and wrote a letter to the emperor, cunningly recommending Xi Jian for a ministerial post as this would rid him of Xi's presence. Not wishing to provoke a confrontation before he was ready, the emperor acquiesced.



Before returning to court, Xi Jian was forced by protocol to go and pay his respects to Wang Dun. The general took the opportunity to try to win him to his cause: 'When the dowager empress tried to do away with the crown prince, the minister Man Wuqiu made up his mind in a flash, and declared his allegiance for the empress. Wasn't that the mark of an experienced and flexible man?'



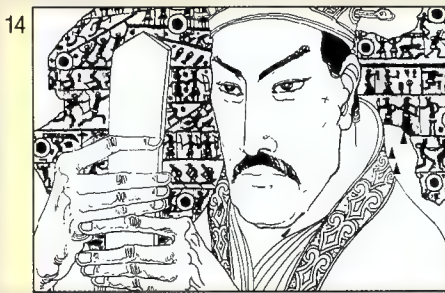
But Xi Jian refused to be swayed: 'How can a real man continue to live in the world, having lost all integrity? Man Wuqiu is helping the empress in her evil designs, so he no longer merits any respect!' And he added: 'We must all stick to our principles. I am not one to renege on my oath of loyalty in order to survive.'



The emperor called up all his nobles and fighting men to confront the rebels, and Xi Jian was appointed commander-in-chief.



Civil war broke out. It was a long, long time before Xi Jian and his forces were able to gain the upper hand, but finally the rebels were defeated. When Wang Dun heard the news as he lay on his sickbed, he succumbed to his illness.



By way of thanks, Xi Jian was ennobled by the emperor, whom he continued to serve faithfully, suppressing further rebellions and contributing greatly to stabilizing the government.

Translated by Tai Chi Yin



The River Lijiang at Guilin in Guangxi Province, southwestern China. A chain of small boats ripples the mirror-like reflections of the limestone pinnacles which have made this one of China's leading beauty spots.  
(Photo by Ruth R. Madden)



## River Inspiration

China's rivers — transport arteries, life blood of the nation, representing a livelihood for countless millions of Chinese — are also favourite subjects with travelling photographers, providing them with a multitude of atmospheric effects.

Shanghai, where the River Huangpu at dawn becomes a shimmering mass of molten gold. And still the convoys of barges and lighters shuttle to and fro tirelessly....  
(Photo by Brien Culhane)





The Grand Canal at Suzhou in Jiangsu, southeastern China. The city has for centuries depended on trade along the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal, and the barge traffic continues unabated to this day.  
(Photo by Brien Culhane)



## *Contributions Welcome!*

**D**o you have a story to tell about your experiences in China? Do you have practical travel tips you would like to pass on to other travellers? Have you taken high-quality photographs which you feel other readers would appreciate?

We are always happy to receive such contributions and readers whose offerings we find we can use will of course be compensated accordingly. Please contact our Editorial Department for further details.



## Average Climatic Conditions in Wumeng Mountains' Area

|          |                  | Jan. | Feb. | Mar. | April | May   | June  | July  | Aug.  | Sept. | Oct. | Nov. | Dec. |
|----------|------------------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|
| Zhaotong | Temperature (°C) | 2.0  | 3.8  | 9.1  | 13.1  | 15.8  | 17.6  | 19.8  | 19.0  | 16.1  | 11.9 | 7.5  | 3.6  |
|          | Rainfall (mm)    | 5.9  | 6.4  | 10.5 | 30.7  | 74.2  | 148.5 | 154.1 | 125.6 | 100.2 | 57.6 | 18.3 | 6.1  |
| Weining  | Temperature (°C) | 1.9  | 3.7  | 8.4  | 12.0  | 14.3  | 15.8  | 17.7  | 16.9  | 14.5  | 10.8 | 6.7  | 3.5  |
|          | Rainfall (mm)    | 10.5 | 10.8 | 13.1 | 41.9  | 107.3 | 182.5 | 183.3 | 160.9 | 129.9 | 73.9 | 25.5 | 11.3 |
| Xuanwei  | Temperature (°C) | 4.9  | 6.7  | 11.9 | 15.5  | 17.8  | 18.3  | 19.4  | 18.6  | 16.7  | 13.7 | 9.3  | 6.2  |
|          | Rainfall (mm)    | 12.3 | 13.3 | 11.7 | 35.2  | 128.2 | 233.2 | 171.7 | 140.2 | 127.2 | 78.5 | 28.9 | 9.2  |

## Train Schedules Kunming — Lupanshui — Chongqing

| 365   | Train No.<br>Station | 366   |
|-------|----------------------|-------|
| 15:20 | Chongqing            | 11:21 |
| 00:01 | Zunyi                | 03:16 |
| 00:09 |                      | 03:06 |
| 04:15 | Guiyang              | 23:01 |
| 04:32 |                      | 22:41 |
| 06:22 | Anshun               | 21:00 |
| 06:28 |                      | 20:55 |
| 07:24 | Luzhi                | 20:02 |
| 07:29 |                      | 19:55 |
| 09:36 | Lupanshui            | 17:56 |
| 09:49 |                      | 17:44 |
| 13:26 | Yiwei                | 14:22 |
| 13:38 |                      | 14:10 |
| 15:56 | Qujing               | 11:15 |
| 16:01 |                      | 11:01 |
| 20:24 | Kunming              | 07:20 |

## Train Schedules Guiyang — Dawan

| 571   | Train No.<br>Station | 572   |
|-------|----------------------|-------|
| 08:17 | Guiyang              | 16:25 |
| 10:53 | Anshun               | 14:00 |
| 11:01 |                      | 13:53 |
| 12:33 | Luzhi                | 12:35 |
| 12:45 |                      | 12:26 |
| 15:32 | Lupanshui            | 09:18 |
| 15:45 |                      | 09:06 |
| 18:06 | Dawan                | 07:17 |

## Flights to and from Guiyang

| Route               | Days of<br>Week | Dep.  | Arr.  | Flight<br>No. |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|---------------|
| Beijing — Guiyang   | 1 3 4 6         | 10:35 | 13:35 | 4108          |
| Guiyang — Beijing   | 1 3 4 6         | 14:30 | 17:20 | 4107          |
| Chengdu — Guiyang   | 2               | 08:20 | 10:00 | CH481         |
|                     | 5               | 07:35 | 08:40 | 4439          |
| Guiyang — Chengdu   | 2               | 14:40 | 16:10 | CH482         |
|                     | 5               | 19:45 | 20:50 | 4440          |
| Guangzhou — Guiyang | 2               | 14:20 | 15:50 | 4328          |
|                     | 5               | 11:25 | 12:55 | 4348          |
|                     | 6               | 11:45 | 13:10 | 3411          |
| Guiyang — Guangzhou | 2               | 16:35 | 17:55 | 4327          |
|                     | 5               | 09:25 | 10:40 | 4347          |
|                     | 6               | 13:45 | 15:10 | 3412          |
| Kunming — Guiyang   | 5               | 10:25 | 11:50 | CH471         |
| Guiyang — Kunming   | 5               | 12:40 | 14:05 | CH472         |
| Shanghai — Guiyang  | 5               | 16:35 | 19:00 | 4546          |
| Guiyang — Shanghai  | 5               | 13:40 | 15:50 | 4545          |
| Guiyang — Chongqing | 1               | 11:00 | 12:10 | CH428         |

(Valid Autumn, 1989)





# Itineraries to Weining and Lake Caohai

Supposing you are starting out from Hong Kong, first take a train to Guangzhou, then continue by train or by air to Guiyang, the capital of Guizhou Province. Flying is recommended, as the 820-kilometre flight only takes about one and a half hours and costs around FEC87. However, you should note that air tickets to Guiyang are not easy to come by in Guangzhou, and it is best to purchase them in advance through China Travel Service or other travel agencies in Hong Kong; in this case, the price would be around HK\$360. At the time of going to press, CAAC has three Guangzhou-Guiyang flights per week, on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday.

Basically, there are two possible routes from Guiyang to Weining.

**Northern route:** Guiyang → Qianxi → Dafang → Bijie → Weining

This covers some 423 kilometres and takes two to two and a half days by car/bus. In Guiyang it is only possible to buy tickets as far as Bijie, where onward bus tickets to Weining are available.

**Southern Route:** Guiyang → Anshun → Luzhi → Shuicheng → Weining

This route is somewhat shorter – about 345 kilometres – and takes around two days by train and bus. This is probably the better choice, since it is possible to travel as far as Shuicheng by train. There are around five trains a day from Guiyang on the Guiyang-Kunming railway line which stop at Shuicheng. The remaining eighty kilometres from Shuicheng to Weining can then be completed by bus.

Another reason for recommending this second route is that it passes through Anshun. If you have time, Anshun is a good jumping-off spot for the Huangguoshu Falls and Longgong Cave to the south and for Daji Cave at Mount Zhijin to the north – all among Guizhou's most famous natural sights.

**N.B.** In Guiyang, long-distance bus tickets can be purchased from the bus station on Yan'an Road or from the ticket office in the square in front of the railway station. Advance train tickets are available from the ticket counter/booth near the fountain on Zhonghua Road Central, while train tickets for same-day travel must be purchased at the Zunyi Road Railway Station. Air tickets back to Guangzhou can be purchased through China Travel Service in Guiyang or at the CAAC booking office at 264 Zunji Road (for passenger service: tel. 523006).



## Guizhou: Past Coverage in CHINA TOURISM

- No. 25 Shui nationality's Duan Festival, Ge people, Dong customs
- No. 30 Guizhou Special (festivals, Huangguoshu Falls, tourist maps, western Guizhou, minority nationalities)
- No. 54 China's Minorities Special ('Full Month' Banquet and the new Miao mother, Dong bridesmaids, Miao courting rituals)
- No. 62 Guizhou Special (karst caves, Miao costumes, Miaoling Range, batik, Huachang Festival)
- No. 65 Miao silver adornments
- No. 75 Huangguoshu Falls Special (including Bouyei Lovers' Festival, Huajiang Canyon, minority weaving)
- No. 86 Fauna and Flora of Mount Fanjing
- No. 104 Guizhou Special (*nuo* masks, Miao and Dong stockades in the southeast, male headgear, Miao embroidery, Guizhou women's skirts, festival information)



# Lake Caohai's Black-Necked Cranes

Weining County's Lake Caohai in northwestern Guizhou provides winter quarters for tens of thousands of migratory birds owing to its favourable climatic conditions and rich resources of fish, shrimps, aquatic plants, etc. Among the rarest of these visitors is the black-necked crane (*Grus nigricollis*).

Unique to China's high plateaux – the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau and the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau – the black-necked crane is the last of the world's fifteen species of crane to have been discovered. According to 1984 statistics, there are over six hundred of them in China, and the largest concentration of them in one place in summer is at Lake Caohai, where three hundred have been sighted. Listed as Class I Protected Animals in China, these cranes have been bred successfully in captivity.

An adult black-necked crane stands over one metre tall and weighs around five kilograms. The sleek body is a light grey in colour with a darker grey back, but the neck is black – hence the name. It has a bright red scalp on a dark head.

Black-necked cranes nest on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau after displays of their famous mating dance. Male and female take turns to incubate the one or two eggs, much bigger than duck eggs. The hatching process takes thirty-one days and generally takes place in early May. Almost as soon as they hatch, the young birds can totter about and search for food on their own. However, they are vulnerable to attack and it is also quite common for them to fight viciously among themselves, all of which contributes to the low survival rate.

With the coming of autumn, the cranes leave their breeding grounds with their young and fly in neat formations to their winter quarters in the warmer marshlands of the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, including Lake Caohai, where they stay until the following March. The earliest time to see the cranes at the lake is October 13 to 25, the latest March 12 to 25. November is probably the best time of all to visit the lake for bird-watching purposes since the weather is fine.

Visitors and photographers should not approach the birds too closely. Once disturbed, the cranes bugle a loud alarm and the whole flock rises into the sky. Sometimes over Lake Caohai the black-necked cranes are joined by grey cranes, and the line of great birds may stretch for over a kilometre – an unforgettable sight.



## Guiyang-Huangguoshu Special Express

A special train has recently been put into service in Guizhou Province to facilitate travel between Guiyang, the provincial capital, and one of the province's most famous natural attractions, the Huangguoshu Falls, 150 kilometres to the southwest. The train, which is an express and is numbered 87/88, leaves Guiyang for Anshun at 08:00 and returns at 18:20. Travelling time each way is one and a half hours, and seats can be reserved in advance.

## Grand Feast in Beihai Park

The famous sixty-year-old Fangshan Restaurant in Beijing's Beihai Park will start giving gourmets a treat this August when it once again presents its 'Grand Manchu-Han Feast'.

This banquet imitates the style of the Qing imperial court down to the Manchu dress worn by the young waiters and waitresses and the interior fittings of the restaurant, with palace lanterns and Ming-dynasty furniture. The feast includes a full range of Manchu specialties, including roast sucking pig and roast duck, and many small tempting dishes of the *dimsum* type, among them steamed *xiaowotou*, a pastry much loved by the Qing Dowager Empress Cixi.

The restaurant makes the ideal setting for this great banquet since its traditional-style buildings, which face Lake Beihai and are set in a fine rock garden, are built on the very spot where the Dowager Empress (1835-1908) took her meals.

## Massive Drop in Bee Population

Scientists have reported an astonishing fifty percent drop in the number of bee colonies in China over the last few years, from thirty million in 1985 to fifteen million by the end of 1988. Chinese biologists at the Bee Research Branch of the Yangtze Ecological Research Institute made the discovery in the course of their investigations into ways to use bees as a major source of protein for human consumption. They were disturbed to find that apiculture has declined so sharply; apart from the several billion yuan loss in earnings this represents, it could also have a serious effect on the ecological balance.

One reason put forward for the phenomenon is the abnormal weather suffered by many parts of the country in recent years. Another is the unstable price of bee products on the market, resulting in the bankruptcy of many apiarian enterprises. Yet another is the lack of education among farmers, who consider bees harmful to their crops and spray them with pesticides. Whatever the causes, the scientists believe laws must be enacted to promote the future development of apiculture.

## Shangri-La Hotels News

Despite delays as a result of recent events in Beijing, construction on the China World Trade Centre in the Chinese capital has been resumed and the management company, Shangri-La International, is optimistic that the adjusted opening dates can be met. The 298-room **Traders Hotel** is now scheduled to open at the end of this year, the deluxe **China World Hotel** in the spring of 1990.

Meanwhile, the **Shangri-La Beijing** has introduced a special package for business travellers, giving a forty percent discount on normal room rates (to around US\$66 per night). This includes complimentary transport from the airport and full use of health club facilities.

## Reopened After Decades

After an interval of twenty-six years, a cargo shipping line recently resumed business between Harbin, capital of Heilongjiang Province in the far northeast of China, and Khabarovsk, the largest city in the Soviet Union's far east. Harbin is located on the River Songhua, a tributary of the River Heilongjiang (known as the River Amur in the Soviet Union), which forms the border between the two countries over much of this region. The major transport hub in northeast China, Harbin is linked with seven cities in the Soviet Union by water. Heilongjiang has also opened its river ports of Jiamusi and Fujin to the Soviet Union, which has reciprocated with a similar number of port openings. This development is intended to facilitate imports and exports and boost foreign trade in the northeast.

## Musical Symposium

This October, an international symposium on the Chinese *guqin* will take place in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province. The *guqin* is a traditional seven-stringed plucked musical instrument which still has an enthusiastic following in China and overseas. More than fifty musicians from Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan, the United States and Australia will be participating; they will have the chance to exchange experiences, study *guqin* scores dating from the Tang and Song dynasties (618-1279), and stage concerts of *guqin* music.

## Lava Cave in Jilin

The so-called Guanma Lava Cave in Panshi County, southern Jilin Province, is now open to the public. It was formed by a volcanic eruption and subsequent movements of the earth aeons ago. Comprising five caverns and offering in all thirty-eight picturesque formations, it is proving extremely useful for research into the climate, geography and hydrology of ancient times.

## Cheaper Domestic Flights

Good news for travellers to China comes from CAAC, which has reduced prices on seventy-one major domestic air routes by twenty percent until December 31, 1989. This incentive applies to both domestic and foreign passengers, and cargo and luggage carried on the routes involved will benefit from the same discount. The routes include Beijing to Guangzhou, Shanghai, Xi'an, Chengdu and Guilin.

## Tour to North Korea

The tourist department of Dandong in Liaoning Province has recently gained permission to launch a tour for foreigners to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea via China. Entering through Hong Kong or Macau, visitors taking this tour are permitted to sightsee in the Chinese cities of Guangzhou, Dalian, Shenyang and Dandong before crossing into North Korea to Pyongyang, the capital, Kaesong and three other places.

## Making a Big Splash

China's smallest winery is starting to make quite a name for itself. The East China Winery Co. Ltd is the first Chinese wine-producer to make it into the listings of the latest edition of the *World Encyclopaedia of Wines*, which is compiled and published in France, after its Qingdao Chardonnay won silver prize at a wine fair in Bordeaux, France.

The winery was established in Qingdao, Shandong Province, only three years ago as a joint venture between Qingdao Winery, the Shandong Foodstuffs Branch of the China National Cereals, Oils and Foodstuffs Import and Export Corporation and the Parry Pacific Company of Hong Kong. The establishment turns out fifteen million litres of wine a year — around a third of the total produced in China — and exports its products to thirteen countries, including the United States, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Australia and Sweden.



## Bamboo 'Corridor' For Pandas

A bamboo belt will soon link two giant panda protection sites in western China. The belt is intended to help preserve the pandas' habitat, reduce in-breeding in existing zones, and increase food supplies; pandas live on arrow bamboo, reserves of which are declining.

This belt, a sort of natural corridor, will be twenty kilometres long and two hundred metres wide. It will stretch from Pingwu County in northern Sichuan to Wenxian County in southern Gansu. Similar corridors are to be built to link another eight giant panda protection zones in Sichuan in the near future.

## Another 55 Places Open

As of August 18 1989, China's cities and counties open to foreign visitors have been increased by fifty-five to 626. Foreigners with valid visas or residence permits may now also visit the following:

**Qinghai:** Guide County, Ledu County, Hualong Hui Autonomous County, Xunhua Salar Autonomous County, Dulan County, Ulan County, Madoi County, Jainca County and Tongren County;

**Hubei:** Yangxin County, Tongshan County, Tongcheng County, Chongyang County, Luotian County, Xishui County and Yingshan County;

**Fujian:** Ningde, Xiapu County, Fuding County, Zherong County, Shouning County, Pingnan County, Zhouning County and Wuping County;

**Sichuan:** Daxian, Daxian County, Mingshan County, Liangping County, Wenchuan County and Lixian County;

**Shaanxi:** Yulin, Dingbian County, Jingbian County, Hengshan County, Ankang, Shiquan County, Hanyin County, Ningshan County, Ziyang County, Xunyang County, Pingli County, Baihe County, Zhenping County, Langao County, Shangzhou, Danfeng County, Zhashui County, Ningqiang County, Weinan, Huaxian County, Ganquan County, Ansai County, Zhidan County, Zichang County and Yanchang County.

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